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Probation and Parole Officers' Experiences Addressing Criminogenic Needs of Adult Felony Offenders

Maria L. Stephenson
Walden University

Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

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Maria L. Stephenson

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Review Committee
Dr. Gregory Campbell, Committee Chairperson,
Criminal Justice Faculty

Dr. Sean Grier, Committee Member,
Criminal Justice Faculty

Dr. Darius Cooper, University Reviewer,
Criminal Justice Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost
Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University
2020

Abstract

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by

Maria L. Stephenson

MS, Capella University, 2010

BS, Mercer University, 2007

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

Probation and parole officers (PPOs) deviate from evidence-based practices implemented to reduce recidivism among adult felony offenders. PPOs fail to adhere to risk-need assessment results during case management, but prior research has not established the reasons for this deviation. This qualitative phenomenological study explored the lived experiences of PPOs implementing the risk needs responsivity (RNR) model by addressing the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders. The theoretical framework for this study was based on Lipsky's street-level bureaucracy theory, Becker's labeling theory, and Andrews and Bonta's RNR theory. This study involved in-depth, individual, semistructured interviews with 6 participants. The data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's six phases of thematic analysis. The results of this study identified three themes related to PPOs addressing criminogenic needs: (a) individual-centric factors, (b) organizational-centric factors, and (c) inherent-centric factors. This study's results indicate that, although PPOs strive to address criminogenic needs, PPOs prioritize noncriminogenic needs or responsivity. The implications for social change from this study include community supervision organizations successfully implementing RNR to have a greater impact on reducing offenders' risk factors. Additionally, PPOs and society may have an increase in understanding their impact on recidivism and individuals overcoming labels that impede rehabilitation efforts. Future research should explore the perceptions of diverse demographics among probation and parole officers, correctional officers, and community stakeholders to address criminogenic needs.

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my loved ones who cheered me on to advance in my education, but time did not allow them to witness this accomplishment. Early in life, my maternal grandparents, Mamagranny and Papa Joe, instilled in me the power of prayer, which helped me to not give up on my dissertation journey. My parents, Greg and Brenda, always believed in me and told me I could do anything I put my mind to. My paternal grandfather, Papa James, always supported me and stressed the importance of education. Although those family members are no longer with me physically, their lifelong lessons and encouragement helped me remain faithful, dedicated, and determined.

To my children, Arletta and Arlanna, this is proof that you can accomplish anything in life no matter what obstacles you face. I lost many of my cheerleaders along the way, but I persevered. No matter what happens in life, don't let anything keep you from accomplishing your goals.

To my husband, Chris, this dissertation is a product of your dedication and love for me. You have supported me for 14 years as I advanced in my education. Thank you!

Last but not least, to the people who think life happening makes life stop, this is proof that life continues, and you can do anything.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Implementing the risk needs responsivity (RNR) model to assist offenders with needs directly related to criminal offending has proven to be challenging for adult probation and parole officers (PPOs) (Schaeffer & Williamson, 2018). Andrews and Bonta (2015) referred to these needs as criminogenic needs in the RNR model. Previous researchers have quantitatively studied PPOs' adherence to risk and need assessments (RNAs) as prescribed by practices adopted by community supervision organizations (Schaeffer & Williamson, 2018; Viglione & Taxman, 2015). There is a gap in the literature regarding PPOs' perceptions on addressing the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders according to organizational policies and practices implemented to reduce recidivism (Haqanee, Peterson-Badali, & Skilling, 2015; Schaeffer & Williamson, 2018). To add to the extant literature, I explored the lived experiences of PPOs implementing the RNR model by addressing criminogenic needs among adult felony offenders.

This qualitative phenomenological study aimed to understand the lived experiences of PPOs addressing the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders. The theoretical framework for this study was based on Lipsky's (1980) street-level bureaucracy theory, Becker's (1963) labeling theory, and Andrews and Bonta's (2015) risk needs responsivity theory. A qualitative methodology was used for this study. According to Yin (2014), the qualitative methodology allows for a phenomenon to be explored through open-ended questions. Potential social implications for this study may

be the effective implementation of the RNR model and evidence-based practices (EBPs) within community supervision organizations.

In this chapter, the background section includes a review of previous research regarding PPOs addressing the criminogenic needs of offenders. The problem statement provides evidence that exploring the lived experiences of PPOs implementing the RNR model by addressing criminogenic needs is current, relevant, and significant to the criminal justice field and adds to the existing body of literature. The purpose of the study explains the study's intent and the phenomenon of interest. The research question identifies key concepts being investigated. The theoretical framework and how it relates to the study approach and research questions are explained. The nature of the study describes the methodology, design, and phenomenon being investigated. Additionally, key terms are defined, assumptions related to the study are highlighted, the scope of the study is provided, and delimitations and limitations of the methodology and design are considered. Finally, the significance of this study as it relates to community supervision organizations, PPOs, adult felony offenders, and stakeholders is supplied.

Background

The history of community supervision was pertinent to this study to understand the current model. Community supervision, also known as community corrections, is comprised of probation and parole. Although probation and parole have slight differences, both have a purpose of diverting offenders from prison. For example, John Augustus, the *Father of Probation*, assisted indigent alcoholics involved in the criminal justice system by posting their bail when they otherwise could not do so themselves

(Raynor, 2018; Reichstein, 2015). In turn, Augustus assisted individuals in obtaining employment, education, and abstinence to reduce future criminal behavior. Parole was implemented in the United States to reform prisoners and return them to society (Doherty, 2013); therefore, probation and parole are rooted in rehabilitation.

The rehabilitation model of community supervision was questioned and consequently replaced with a surveillance model as a result of increased crime rates during the 1980s (Cullen & Gendreau, 2000). However, Andrews and Bonta (2015) determined that surveillance was not effective in reducing recidivism. Andrews, Bonta, and Hoge (1990) found that rehabilitative services grounded in the RNR model were more effective in reducing recidivism than correctional sanctions and other rehabilitative programs that did not adhere to RNR. Thus, the RNR model is used to enhance offender supervision and reduce recidivism. Community supervision organizations use risk need assessments (RNAs) to predict the risk of an offender reoffending and inform rehabilitation treatment efforts to reduce that risk.

Community corrections' implementation of RNR requires PPOs to supervise offenders according to their assessed risk of reoffending, individual needs related to reducing that risk (criminogenic needs), and individual characteristics associated with addressing those needs (i.e., mental health or cognitive dissonance) (Andrews & Bonta, 2015). According to RNR, intensive supervision and programs are more effective when delivered to high-risk offenders (Andrews & Bonta, 2015; Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2002). In a meta-analysis of 80 studies, Andrews and Bonta (2010) confirmed that high-risk offenders are five times less likely to reoffend when placed in programming compared to

low-risk offenders. The RNR model provides that inappropriately assigning low-risk offenders to intensive programming can inadvertently increase reoffending. Bonta, Wallace-Capretta, and Rooney (2000) found that low-risk offenders have a lower recidivism rate (15%) when placed in minimal treatment programming compared to the rate (32%) for low-risk offenders placed in intensive treatment programming. Similarly, Morash, Kashy, Smith, and Cobbina (2019) found that low-risk women with treatment responses to drug-related violations have a 23.4% decrease in new arrests. The authors also found that nondrug-related violations met with treatment responses have an increase in recidivism. However, Viglione and Taxman (2018) found that PPOs use professional judgment that contradicts the results of RNAs implemented by community supervision organizations as a result of adopting RNR.

Previous research has examined PPOs' adherence to RNAs. Bosma, Kunst, Dirkzwager, and Nieuwbeerta (2018) used a quantitative methodology to explore program referrals of detainees in the Dutch prevention of recidivism program. They found that offenders were not referred to programs according to the RNA as prescribed by the organization (Bosma et al., 2018). Thus, Bosma et al. confirmed the street-level bureaucracy theory. Furthermore, offenders who were not identified on RNAs as needing treatment were referred to treatment programs. Haqanee et al. (2015) used a qualitative semistructured interview approach to explore the implementation gap of RNA results in case management through the lived experiences of 29 juvenile probation officers in Toronto, Canada. Haqanee et al. (2015) found that a lack of resources and PPOs' uncertainty about their role in addressing criminogenic needs attributed to criminogenic

needs being addressed that were not identified on the RNA. Additionally, Haqanee et al. found that emphasis was placed on specific responsivity factors more than identified criminogenic needs. This deviation results in offenders who qualify for and need treatment not having access to the resources.

Deviation from RNAs is not singular to correctional or juvenile populations. Similar to Bosma et al. (2018), Schaefer and Williamson (2018) applied a quantitative survey method to examine the influence of professional characteristics, job burnout and stress, and supervision strategies on PPOs' compliance with data entry and RNA results. Schaeffer and Williamson found that PPOs were not compliant with data entry processes, failed to complete the assessment tool as required, and did not adhere to the assessment recommendations. Likewise, in a qualitative study to explore how PPOs who supervised adults used a validated RNA, Viglione, Rudes, and Taxman (2015) found that PPOs did not correctly administer the RNA. Furthermore, the authors found that PPOs administered the assessment differently. Moreover, PPOs addressed needs that were not identified in assessment results that, if identified, would be considered criminogenic needs.

After an exhaustive review of the literature, I found no articles exploring PPOs' experiences in implementing the RNR model by addressing criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders, aside from quantitative analysis. Researchers suggested that future research focus on the reasons PPOs deviate from RNA results (Schaeffer & Williamson, 2018), but there were no studies reviewed that provided that the suggestion had been

addressed. Conducting this study may assist community supervision organizations with successfully and effectively implementing EBPs to reduce recidivism.

The goal of this study was to increase understanding of the lived experiences of PPOs so that agencies may appropriately develop policies and practices to accomplish the organization's mission. Additionally, community supervision organizations could redesign or develop training for PPOs to be more effective in case management. The results of this study may also inform community supervision organizations on issues related to adherence to RNA tools in case management. In turn, there may be increased opportunities for offenders' criminogenic needs to be addressed while under community supervision. Finally, the results of this study may be useful to inform policymakers about how society and policies impact PPOs in addressing the needs of offenders. Adherence to EBPs has implications for reducing the community supervision population.

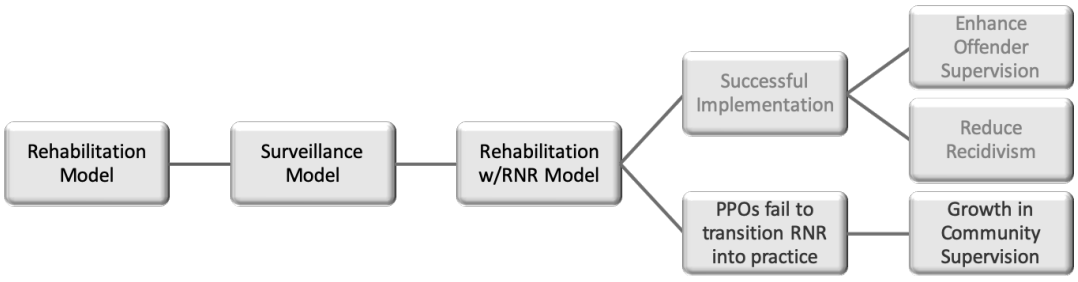

Figure 1. Background of research.

Problem Statement

The problem addressed in this study was PPOs' deviation from EBPs implemented to reduce recidivism among adult felony offenders. In 2016, one in 55 adults in the United States were under community supervision (Pew Charitable Trusts,

2018a). This population has increased 239% since 1980 (Pew Charitable Trusts, 2018a). Although community supervision organizations have implemented EBPs—such as the RNR model—to provide effective supervision and reduce recidivism, PPOs have not followed through with the implementation. The RNR model includes assessing offenders' risk to reoffend, identifying offenders' criminogenic needs that should be addressed to reduce the risk, and considering individual characteristics when determining treatment methods (Pew Charitable Trusts, 2018b). Schaeffer and Williamson (2018) and Haqanee et al. (2015) found that PPOs have not adhered to RNA results as prescribed by community supervision organizations. According to Schaeffer and Williamson, 78% of PPOs targeted needs not identified on the RNA, and they found that 44% of PPOs disregarded criminogenic needs identified by the RNA.

Recent research related to implementing EBPs in community supervision has focused on RNAs' prediction of offender outcomes (Givs, 2017) or used a quantitative approach to measure PPOs adherence to RNAs in case management (Schaeffer & Williamson, 2018). Haqanee et al. (2015) considered the lived experiences of probation officers adhering to RNAs, but the study focused on juvenile probation officers and youth offenders. Nonetheless, Haqanee et al. conducted one of the few studies that explicitly considered the lived experiences of PPOs addressing criminogenic needs.

Overall, previous researchers focused on validation of RNAs, predictive factors of criminogenic needs, and the juvenile offender population, rather than considering how adult PPOs effectively implement and use the assessments to obtain the intended results of organizational implementation. For example, Givs (2017) confirmed that criminogenic

needs—such as employment, substance abuse, and education level—are significantly related to recidivism among adult probationers. However, Givs did not offer how adult PPOs are adhering to assessment results by addressing those needs during case management. Schaeffer and Williamson (2018) quantitatively studied probation officers' adherence to RNA results in case management decisions as it relates to job burnout and stress, bringing forth the need for researchers to continue investigating how practitioners use RNAs and the reasons PPOs may not habitually adhere to assessment processes and outcomes.

Purpose

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of PPOs implementing the RNR model by addressing criminogenic needs among adult felony offenders. Although community supervision organizations implement EBPs, Bosma et al. (2018) indicated that the effectiveness and completion of implementation relies heavily on frontline workers, which are PPOs. The phenomenon of interest was the perception of PPOs, as frontline workers, implementing organizational practices by addressing the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders. Deviation from implemented policies and practices can lead to a decrease in the effectiveness of supervision and an increase in recidivism. An exploration of adult PPOs' lived experiences implementing the RNR model through addressing criminogenic needs among adult felony offenders may provide opportunities for criminal justice organizations to implement EBPs successfully, accomplishing the mission of providing effective supervision and reducing recidivism.

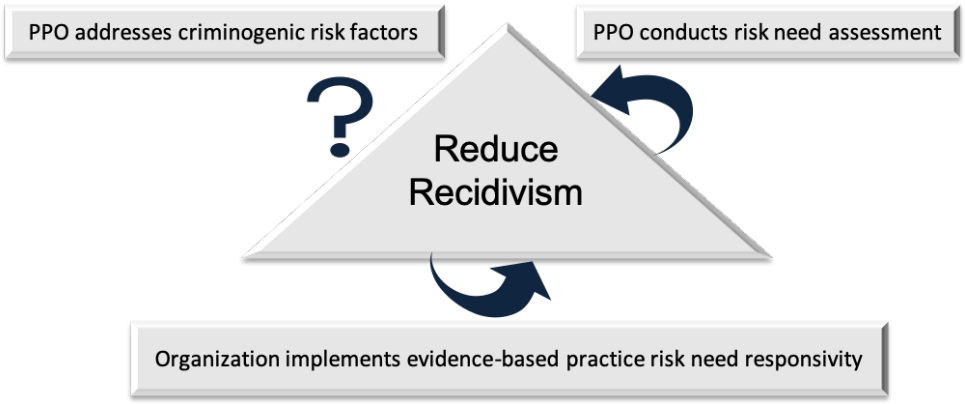

Figure 2. Gap in literature.

Research Questions

For this qualitative phenomenological study, the experiences of PPOs addressing the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders under community supervision was explored. The research question guiding this research study was: What are the lived experiences of PPOs addressing the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders?

Theoretical Framework for the Study

In this study, the lived experiences of PPOs addressing the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders was explored. A review of the literature revealed a gap in the exploration of street-level bureaucrats' and PPOs' perceptions of transitioning the RNR theory into practice for supervised individuals labeled *offenders*. Thus, the theoretical framework included the street-level bureaucracy, RNR, and labeling theories.

Street-Level Bureaucracy Theory

Street-level bureaucracy theory was the foundation of the theoretical framework for this study. According to Grant and Osanloo (2014), a theoretical framework drives the research question. Lipsky (1980) first explored the work characteristics of *street-level bureaucrats* in 1969 as they related to the importance of the organizational structure and

the relationship between citizens and public service organization employees. The street-level bureaucracy theory is pertinent because it focuses on employees of public service organizations implementing organizational policies. According to Lipsky, although organizations implemented policies and practices, it is the frontline workers who are responsible for the actual implementation. The street-level bureaucracy theory provided that street-level bureaucrats struggle with implementation because of various factors.

Labeling Theory

Becker's (1963) labeling theory postulated that society labels individuals according to behavior. The labeling theory was appropriate for this study because of the labels assigned to individuals supervised by PPOs. According to Willis (2018), labels such as *offender*, *sex offender*, and *criminal* are commonplace for individuals involved in the criminal justice system. Labels add to other challenges individuals reintegrating into the community encounter, such as securing housing, employment, and financial stability to care for family (Moore & Tangney, 2017). This snowballing effect of labeling results in internal and external life changes that are difficult to overcome unless the behavior is addressed. As a result, labels interfere with the services provided by street-level bureaucrats.

Risk Need Responsivity Theory

Andrews and Bonta's (2015) RNR theory focused on the idea that community supervision organizations can provide effective supervision and reduce recidivism by supervising offenders according to their risk of reoffending. Furthermore, the theory asserts that community supervision organizations should address offenders' specific

needs related to reducing those risks (criminogenic needs). Additionally, the RNR theory focused on general and specific factors that affect offenders' ability to address criminogenic needs, such as cognitive deficits. Andrews and Bonta provided that the use of all three principles (risk, need, and responsivity) has a higher impact on reducing recidivism than not using or not fully implementing the model. As a result, treatment programs in correctional settings experienced a 17% reduction in recidivism and community settings experienced a 35% reduction (Bonta & Andrews, 2007). Community supervision organizations have implemented RNAs to identify offenders' risks of reoffending and have developed policies for supervising offenders according to those risks, but PPOs have not fulfilled their role in the implementation by addressing criminogenic needs identified on RNAs during supervision.

Nature of the Study

A qualitative methodology was used for this study, which was appropriate to explore the lived experiences of PPOs implementing the RNR model by addressing the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders. According to Yin (2014), the qualitative methodology allows for a phenomenon to be studied through open-ended questions.

The research design in this study used a phenomenological approach. Phenomenological research is conducted when there is little or no research on a phenomenon (Rudestam & Newton, 2015). A nonprobabilistic purposive sampling approach was used to select participants. Purposive sampling is a sampling strategy that selects cases that provide specific, detailed information related to the purpose of the study (Patton, 2015). The population sampled was PPOs who supervise adult felony offenders

in a southeastern state. Participants were interviewed using in-depth, semistructured interviews with a modified instrument from a previous study conducted by Haqanee et al. (2015). I obtained permission via e-mail to use and modify the interview instrument (see Appendix A). The method to conduct interviews was Zoom conference calls. Interviews provide self-report information from the participants of the study (Rudestam & Newton, 2015). Participants consisted of six PPOs. According to Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006), data saturation can be reached in six to 12 interviews.

Definitions

Probation and parole officers (PPOs): Individuals who supervise adult offenders under community supervision (Pew Charitable Trusts, 2018a).

Community supervision and community corrections: Mandatory oversight in a community, outside a secure facility, of an individual who has been sentenced for violating the law, ordered by a judge or parole board (Pew Charitable Trusts, 2018a).

Criminogenic need: Risk factors identified by risk and need assessments that, when addressed, have been proven by research to have a positive (decreased) effect on recidivism (Andrews & Bonta, 2015).

Evidence-based practices (EBPs): Practices and programs that research has shown to be effective in reducing recidivism (Pew Charitable Trusts, 2018a).

Recidivism: Reoffending or future criminal behavior of individuals with a criminal history (Givs, 2017).

Risk and need assessment tool: Actuarial assessment of risk and needs for offenders under community supervision that assists in matching offenders with

appropriate treatment programs and identifies needs that should be targeted to reduce criminal behavior (Viglione & Taxman, 2018).

Street-level bureaucracy: Public service organizations that employ street-level bureaucrats who have direct interaction with clients, exercise discretion, and have an amount of control over access to government benefits, programs, and services and allocation of public sanctions (Lipsky, 1980).

Street-level bureaucrats: Public service/government employees with reduced resources, ambiguous roles with independent discretion, and who have difficulty in transitioning policy into practice (Lipsky, 1980).

Assumptions

For this study, several assumptions guided data collection. First, it was assumed that my background in criminal justice provided credibility and increased the likelihood of PPOs participating in the study. Second, it was assumed that participants were honest in responses to enhance the experience of practitioners in addressing criminogenic needs and community supervision organizations in implementing EBPs. The third assumption was that the PPOs provided accurate responses to interview questions to provide insight into the phenomenon. The fourth assumption was that PPOs desired to share experiences in implementing EBPs to improve the accuracy of addressing criminogenic needs of adult offenders to reduce recidivism. Lastly, it was assumed that community supervision organizations would value the research and use it for future policy implementations related to EBPs, as well as develop training to fill the gap of implementation.

Scope and Delimitations

The scope of this qualitative phenomenological study involved in-depth semistructured interviews with six PPOs on their experience implementing EBPs by addressing the criminogenic needs of adult offenders. This research used purposive sampling in which PPOs who have experienced the phenomenon were included to provide the experiential data needed. The scope of this study focused on PPOs supervising adult offenders and addressing criminogenic needs due to the increase in the adult community supervision population. Individuals who comprise the adult community supervision population may be first offenders, have previous episodes under community supervision, or are currently being supervised under community supervision. However, the purpose of this study was to understand the participants' experiences in addressing criminogenic needs of adult offenders under community supervision regardless of the offenders' criminal history.

The first delimitation of this study was PPOs with experience supervising adult offenders and linking those offenders with resources to reduce their risk of reoffending. As community supervision organizations staff diverse positions, all PPOs do not supervise offenders. Some PPOs supervise offenders administratively, which does not include addressing criminogenic needs (Viglione & Taxman, 2018). Another delimitation was that static risk factors identified on RNAs, such as criminal history, and responsivity were excluded from this study. The street-level bureaucracy theory, labeling theory, and RNR theory most related to the focus of this study. The probation theory and elitist theory were considered for the theoretical framework of this study, but the street-level

bureaucracy theory, labeling theory, and RNR theory were the most appropriate for this study.

Limitations

Qualitative research provides a unique opportunity to explore areas that are otherwise limited by quantitative analysis. However, there were limitations to this qualitative study. The first limitation of this qualitative study was that it cannot be broadly generalized. Therefore, the results of this study were limited to the sample included in the study. The second limitation of this study was the small sample size. The third limitation of this study was the restraints of the modified interview instrument. The first challenge of this study was recruiting participants. The second challenge of this study was scheduling interviews with individuals in various geographical locations. There were no barriers in this study.

Significance

The significance of this study was to add to the body of knowledge by understanding how PPOs adhere to EBPs implemented by community supervision organizations in case management, if at all. The exploration of the lived experiences of PPOs provides insight into the criminogenic needs addressed for offenders to reintegrate into the community successfully, thus accomplishing the implementation of EBPs. Barriers have been identified that interfere with PPOs addressing the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders. This study was redounded to the benefit of positive social change in community supervision organizations implementing EBPs to provide effective

supervision and reduce recidivism. Thus, there may be an increase in the likelihood of offenders returning to society with a decreased risk of reoffending.

Summary

Probation and parole officers supervising adult offenders under community supervision have failed to adhere to practices and policies implemented by organizations (Schaeffer & Williamson, 2018; Viglione & Taxman, 2018). Consequently, there may be adverse consequences for the community supervision population. Additionally, community supervision organizations may experience minimal successful outcomes for implemented initiatives to reduce recidivism. However, the reasons for the deviation from implemented practices and policies to reduce recidivism by PPOs were unknown. It was essential to gather information on policy deviation from the perspectives of PPOs to understand how PPOs experience addressing criminogenic needs of adult offenders. This information may guide community supervision organizations in policy implementation to reduce recidivism, thus decreasing the community supervision offender population. Chapter 2 provides a synthesis of the literature that guides this study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

There is a problem with PPOs deviating from EBPs implemented to reduce recidivism among adult felony offenders (Schaeffer & Williamson, 2018; Viglione et al., 2015). This current problem is an impediment to PPOs properly using the RNA and addressing the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders (Viglione et al., 2015). Several possibilities for this deviation have been explored (Haqanee et al., 2015; Schaeffer & Williamson, 2018). However, there was a gap in the literature on the lived experiences of PPOs who supervise adult offenders pertaining to the implementation of adopted organizational practices, such as the RNR model. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of PPOs implementing RNR model by addressing criminogenic needs among adult felony offenders.

Although multiple models of EBPs exist, community supervision organizations have adopted the RNR model for over 30 years. Transitioning the focus of community supervision from punishment to its foundation of rehabilitation, the RNR model presented that focusing on high risk/high need offenders and addressing criminogenic needs decrease recidivism (Andrews & Bonta, 2015). Therefore, the problem of PPOs deviating from EBPs has guided the literature for a multitude of reasons. First, it is with PPOs, the frontline workers, that actual implementation of organizational practices and policies occurs (Lipsky, 1980). Second, research reveals that improper implementation of EBPs has inverse effects on recidivism (Andrews, Zinger, et. al., 1990). Third, the growth

of the community supervision population can lead to overcrowding if recidivism is not reduced.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature search strategy used to saturate existing literature. Next, I review the theoretical framework that informed the discussion on PPOs' adherence to EBPs implemented by community supervision organizations, the history of community supervision and laws is reviewed, existing literature on PPOs addressing criminogenic needs is analyzed, and finally, a summary is provided.

Literature Search Strategy

For this study, literature was first searched through Google Scholar and Walden University databases using the following search terms: *probation or parole officers and criminogenic needs, criminogenic needs, street-level bureaucracy theory, labeling theory, risk need responsivity, criminal justice reform, evidence-based practices and programming,* and *probation and parole history*. Current dissertations on the *street-level bureaucracy theory, labeling theory, risk-need responsivity model*, and *probation or parole officers and criminogenic needs* were reviewed, and their sources were data mined. Books, government websites, and reports were also reviewed. The searches yielded over 100 studies, of which approximately 80 were most relevant to the topic.

Theoretical Foundation

The theoretical foundation for this study was based on Lipsky's (1980) street-level bureaucracy theory, Andrews and Bonta's (2015) RNR theory, and Becker's (1963) labeling theory. PPOs are the frontline workers, or *street-level bureaucrats*, who interact with offenders as their primary duty. Furthermore, as street-level bureaucrats, PPOs are

responsible for providing a service to offenders by addressing criminogenic needs according to the RNR theory. However, the labels associated with individuals under community supervision can interfere with PPOs' attempts to address criminogenic needs or can influence PPOs to not conform with the RNR model. Therefore, the combination of these theories supported the problem addressed in this study.

Street-Level Bureaucracy Theory

Lipsky's (1980) street-level bureaucracy theory explained that employees tend to have a level of discretion in dispensing services to clients. Bosma et al. (2018) provided that street-level bureaucrats do not always transition policies into practice as intended when implemented by organizations. Other researchers (Haqanee et al., 2015; Schaeffer & Williamson, 2018; Viglione & Taxman, 2018; Viglione et al., 2015) have identified that community supervision organizations have adopted EBPs to reduce recidivism, but a problem existed with PPOs transitioning the adoption of EBPs into practice. Therefore, successful implementation of policies or practices does not solely depend on community supervision organizations, but also on frontline employees, or *street-level bureaucrats*, performing day-to-day operations.

The experiences of PPOs as street-level bureaucrats have resulted in the implementation of individual policies that differ from the policies intended by community supervision organizations. Lipsky (1980) noted that street-level bureaucrats often make immediate decisions for the benefit of citizens who receive public services. This immediate decision-making has resulted in PPOs enhancing the needs of offenders to increase eligibility for programs or services. As a result, offenders who do not qualify

for services receive them, whereas citizens who qualify for services are not allotted access.

Although street-level bureaucrats provide services for the benefit of citizens, Lipsky (1980) indicated that they also make decisions that may negatively affect other aspects of citizens' lives. For example, interactions between citizens with street-level bureaucrats, such as judges and probation or parole officers, can result in citizens being labeled *convicted felons*, *delinquent*, *probationers*, and *parolees*. Additionally, teachers, as street-level bureaucrats, designate individuals as *educated*, *failed*, *smart*, or *needs improvement*. Consequently, Lipsky provided that the decisions of street-level bureaucrats impact citizens beyond the immediate services provided. Thus, the street-level bureaucracy theory is closely associated with the concept of the labeling theory.

Labeling Theory

Becker (1963) identified that labeling has various components including the rules established, those who establish the rules, and the individuals who abide by or break the rules. Street-level bureaucrats establish rules, or laws, for society to follow. As it pertains to this study, PPOs supervise individuals who have violated those laws. Consequently, individuals are labeled *offender*, *criminal*, *probationer*, *parolee*, and *sex offender* (Moore & Tangney, 2017; Willis, 2018). Furthermore, PPOs enforce new rules for those individuals to follow, referred to as *conditions of probation or parole*. PPOs seek to assist these individuals in addressing criminogenic needs to reduce future criminal offending, but labels hinder this responsibility of PPOs by adding challenges for offenders in areas such as securing housing, employment, and education.

Labels impact various aspects of a person's life and can interfere with opportunities to overcome the labels. According to Shlosberg, Mandery, West, and Callaghan (2014), labeling results in stigmatizations of how offenders are perceived or viewed by others. Becker (1963) emphasized the importance of those who label individuals to consider the consequences of those labels. For example, employers may be less likely to hire a person with a criminal background (Swanson, Reese, & Bond, 2012). Even if employers are willing to hire people with a criminal background, PPOs have to approve the employment of those they supervise (Taxman, 2012). Consequently, laws and conditions of probation or parole may restrict individuals with such labels from obtaining certain employment. Hull (2006) indicated that some states restrict individuals labeled as convicted felons from obtaining certain professional licenses. Simon (2007) and Alexander (2010) indicated that some offenders are restricted from public services that others without labels are privy to, such as public housing, public assistance, and student loans. Labels hinder efforts to assist those who are labeled, such as rehabilitative programming for offenders.

Labeling affects community supervision organizations' mission of reducing recidivism. Becker (1963) found that labels can influence continued deviant behavior and participation in criminal activities. To this end, the terms used by the criminal justice system to refer to justice-involved individuals are contradicting the desired outcomes (Willis, 2018). Bernburg, Krohn, and Rivera (2006) found that official labeling triggers increased involvement with deviant groups and indicated that labeled individuals are less likely to associate with nonlabeled individuals. Therefore, individuals who are labeled

identified with the label and act according to the new identity to remove the isolation of stigma. However, PPOs are responsible for decreasing involvement with antisocial associates for individuals under supervision to reduce recidivism.

Risk-Need-Responsivity Theory

Similar to the street-level bureaucracy and labeling theory, Andrews and Bonta (2015) noted that criminal attitudes have an effect on future criminal behavior. The services provided by human service professionals are primary in addressing that behavior. Andrews and Bonta (2015) developed the RNR model, an EBP, to address criminal behavior. The RNR approach has been adopted for over 30 years by correctional organizations, including community corrections. Andrews, Bonta, and Hoge (1990) found that rehabilitative services grounded in the RNR model were more effective in reducing recidivism than correctional sanctions and other rehabilitative programs that did not adhere to the RNR model. Thus, the RNR model aims to enhance offender supervision and reduce recidivism.

According to Andrews and Bonta (2015), the RNR model consists of three general principles: (a) risk, (b) need, and (c) responsivity. The first principle, risk, requires community supervision organizations to use actuarial assessments to predict future criminal activity and match their level of supervision according to their risk of reoffending (focusing on high-risk offenders). Assessing an offenders' risk considers many factors, some of which are static, such as criminal history, and others are dynamic, such as antisocial associates (Schaeffer & Williamson, 2018). Confirming risk factors identified by Andrews and Bonta, Givs (2017) found that age, education level,

employment status, substance use, and offense types were predictors of recidivism. However, the importance of the risk principle is often reduced because it is used as a management tool to allocate community supervision resources and structure PPOs' workload.

The risk principle is used to increase the severity of penalties and supervision levels. Andrews and Bonta (2015) provided that offenders assessed as high risk are candidates for higher levels of supervision. In other words, PPOs should have more interaction with high-risk offenders than low-risk offenders, and high-risk offenders are referred to rehabilitative programming more than low-risk offenders. As it relates to risk, Andrews and Bonta found that moderate- to high-risk offenders should receive more intensive services than low-risk offenders. Thus, low-risk offenders have a lower probability to recidivate even in the absence of rehabilitative programming.

Although the risk principle can be used to identify supervision levels, effective implementation of EBPs uses the risk principle to properly identify individuals who should receive services in an effort to reduce recidivism (Andrews & Dowden, 2006). The risk principle does not stand alone, so to have an impact on recidivism reduction, the risk principle must be accompanied by appropriately targeting needs and responsivity (the other two RNR principles) of offenders.

The second principle, need, identifies the most appropriate target of services that reduce this risk (criminogenic needs; Andrews & Bonta, 2015). Andrews, Bonta, and Hoge (1990) expressed the importance of separating needs that have an influence on recidivism from those that do not. The authors identified eight central needs that, if

addressed, reduce recidivism. The criminogenic needs identified as having an impact to reduce reoffending are (a) history of antisocial behavior, (b) antisocial personality patterns, (c) antisocial cognitions, (d) antisocial associates, (e) family and marital relations, (f) lack of employment/education, (g) leisure/recreation, and (h) substance use (Wooditch, Tang, & Taxman, 2014). Hence, PPOs should focus on offenders' risks and needs. However, Viglione, et al. (2015) found that 39% of in-depth interactions and 88% of brief interactions PPOs had with probationers focused on needs such as employment, housing, and substance use. Additionally, Viglione et al. found that fewer in-depth interactions (35%) focused on both risk and needs. Moreover, PPOs refrained from addressing the needs of antisocial attitudes and antisocial associates or family.

Although the implementation of EBPs is expected to reduce risk management and enhance case planning, PPOs continue to use the former. Viglione et al. (2015) found that when attempting to address criminogenic needs, such as employment, PPOs associated failing to secure employment with being in violation rather than identifying how employment could enhance future success. Thus, employment transitioned to a risk rather than a need. According to Dyck, Campbell, and Wershler (2018), there is a positive effect on offenders when PPOs adhere to RNAs as prescribed. For example, Bunting, Staton, Winston, and Pangburn (2019) found that more employed parolees remained in the community 1-year post-release (82.61% worked part-time; 81.17% worked full-time) compared to unemployed parolees (51.59%). Furthermore, employed parolees remained in the community for a longer period of time (340.14 days; 343.21 days; 260.09, respectively). Similarly, Tripodi, Kim, and Bender (2010) found that addressing the

criminogenic need of employment decreased the odds of recidivism while failing to address substance use/abuse increased the odds of reincarceration. However, according to Viglione et al., substance use/abuse was the least discussed topic in interactions (9%). Properly implementing EBPs and addressing criminogenic needs are vital to effective supervision to reduce recidivism. Furthermore, the need principle, along with the risk principle, should be combined with the responsivity principle.

The third principle, responsivity, provides that the intervention's style and mode should match the offender's personality, ability to learn, and motivation. In other words, the responsivity principle considers individual offender characteristics that influence the offenders' ability to respond to treatment (Andrews & Bonta, 2015). According to Andrews and Bonta (2015) and Jung and Dowker (2016), there are two types of responsivity, general and specific. The authors provided that general responsivity refers to the use of cognitive-behavioral techniques in treatment that influence behaviors. Additionally, specific responsivity recognizes that non-criminogenic needs that are individual to each offender may enhance or interfere with the response to treatment, thus they should be addressed to have an impact on reducing recidivism. Treatment programs that address responsivity and target offenders' needs could have a larger effect on reducing recidivism (Andrews, Bonta, & Wormith, 2011). Therefore, PPOs should use a combination of the three general RNR principles to address offenders' criminogenic needs.

Responsivity should not be confused with criminogenic needs. Furthermore, responsivity should not be used to target treatment. However, Haqanee et al. (2015)

found that PPOs addressed responsivity over criminogenic needs. Furthermore, PPOs delayed addressing criminogenic needs to increase offenders' motivation. While addressing responsivity removes barriers to increase the motivation of offenders to comply with supervision and increase the readiness to address criminogenic needs, responsivity does not have an impact on recidivism (Skeem & Manchak, 2008). This problem impacts adult felony offenders under community supervision successfully reintegrating into the community and not returning to the criminal justice system.

Drawing from the street-level bureaucracy, RNR, and labeling theories, this study focused on the experiences of PPOs transitioning the RNR model adopted by community corrections organizations from theory to practice. Specifically, this study explored the experiences of PPOs as frontline workers, or *street-level bureaucrats*, in addressing the criminogenic needs of adult offenders as prescribed by community corrections organizations. PPOs provide services to adult offenders to ensure compliance of court-ordered sentences while simultaneously assisting offenders through rehabilitative programming to overcome the label of being a criminal. Accordingly, PPOs ultimately make decisions, develop coping mechanisms, and establish routines to accommodate the workload and ambiguity of the profession, all of which becomes the policy PPOs implement rather than the organization's policies (Lipsky, 1980; Schaeffer & Williamson, 2018). When PPOs implement individual practices the mission of community corrections organizations to reduce recidivism may not be achieved. Therefore, it is important to gain the perspective of PPOs in addressing the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders.

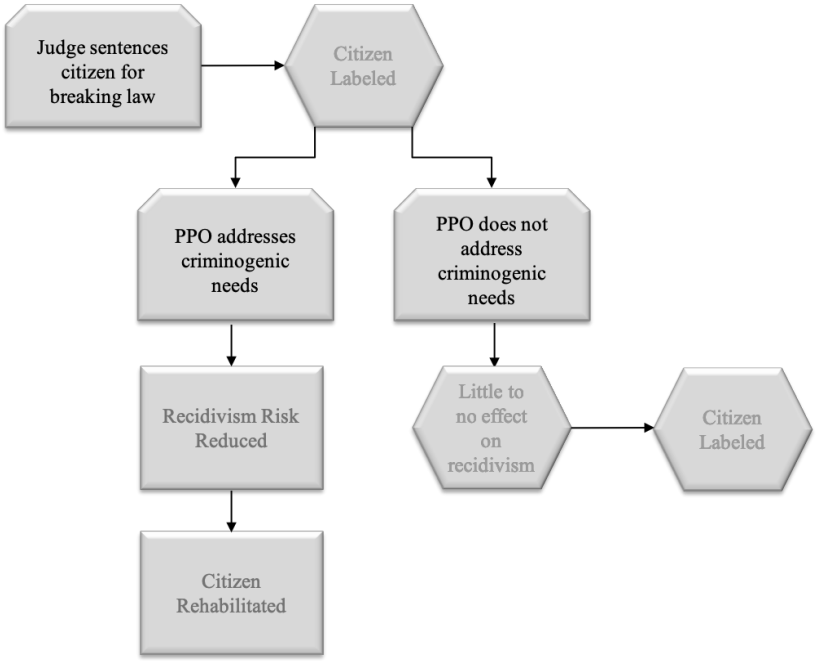

Figure 3. Cycle of probation and parole officers' addressing criminogenic needs.

History of Probation and Parole in the United States

Community supervision is comprised of probation and parole. Although similar in structure and goals, probation and parole have slight differences. Probation is a court order issued by a judge, in lieu of a jail or prison sentence, that permits an offender to serve a jail or prison sentence in the community under the supervision of a probation officer dependent upon abiding by certain conditions. With a mission of diverting offenders from jail and prison, probation is an alternative to incarceration that is traced to Boston, Massachusetts with John Augustus in 1841 (Augustus, 1852). Credited as the 'Father of Probation,' Augustus assisted indigent alcoholics involved in the criminal justice system by posting their bail when they otherwise could not do so themselves (Raynor, 2018; Reichstein, 2015). Thus, he introduced the concept of posting bail in the United States (Petersilia, 1997). Prior to assuming responsibility for an individual,

Augustus considered an individual's age, character, and environment (people, places, and things that influenced positive change) to determine their likelihood of success in the community (Labrecque, 2017).

Developing the process of reporting to and advising the courts, currently known as pre-sentence investigations (PSI), Augustus informed the courts of the success or lack thereof for the individuals he supervised. Augustus's reports were considered when the courts determined the appropriate punishment for the offender, often times only issuing a fine (Augustus, 1852). By 1858, Augustus assisted nearly 2,000 men, women, and children (Petersilia, 1997). Moreover, he assisted the individuals in becoming productive citizens through refraining from alcohol use, remaining crime free, and obtaining employment, housing, and education (Petersilia, 1997; Reichstein, 2015). Not surprisingly, Massachusetts became the first state to enact probation laws in Boston in 1878 providing for the first official probation officer to be appointed by the Mayor and supervised under the authority of the Policy Chief (De Courcy, 1910; Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 2019). By 1956, all 50 states and the federal government enacted probation laws for adults and juveniles (Abadinsky, 2009; Taxman, 2012).

Differing from probation, parole is on the back-end of incarceration permitting the early, conditional release of a prisoner to the community. Inspired by principles of Alexander Maconochie - the 'Father of Parole' - and Sir Walter Crofton of the United Kingdom who supported the reform of prisoners and returning them to society. In 1876, the United States implemented indeterminate sentencing and conditional release, currently known as parole (Doherty, 2013). *Parole* is a French term meaning *word*; thus,

a prisoner granted parole gave their word to be a law-abiding citizen. Parole was first implemented in the United States in New York at the Elmira Reformatory. Regarded as the 'Father of American Parole' and the 'Father of Reform,' penologist Zebulon Brockway was the first superintendent at Elmira Reformatory and implemented the Irish Prison Systems' model (Travisono & Hawkes, 1995). With this implementation, prisoners were rewarded parole upon demonstrating good behavior while incarcerated and obtained prerelease employment. Although modified to remove Maconochie's Mark System - which awarded credits for good behavior, hard work, and study - from the United States parole system, the otherwise reported success of 82% of parolees not returning to crime spread (Doherty, 2013). By 1942, all states enacted parole laws to reintegrate prisoners into the community (Angle, 2014).

Both probation and parole, required individuals to abide by specific conditions to remain in the community, to include refraining from future criminal activity, reporting monthly, obtaining and maintaining employment, and being tested for drug use (Hoffman, 1997). Additionally, they were supervised by a third-party to ensure compliance with conditions (Augustus, 1852; Dougherty, 2013). Failure to abide by the conditions resulted in the prisoner's removal from the community and return to jail or prison.

Probation and Parole Laws Enacted

Two years after enacting the first probation law, Massachusetts passed legislation providing for a probation officer to be employed in all municipalities in 1880 (De Courcy, 1910). By 1898, Massachusetts extended probation legislation to employ a

probation officer in all counties, followed by Vermont (Reichstein, 2015). In 1899, Rhode Island and Minnesota enacted probation laws for juveniles and adults but enhanced it by introducing complete state control (Chute, 1933). As a result, probation was no longer under the authority of the local Police Chief, counties, or courts but the state. Although states followed suit with enacting adult probation laws (1897 in Missouri, 1898 in Vermont, 1899 in Illinois, Minnesota, and Rhode Island, 1900 in New Jersey, 1901 in New, York, 1903 in California, Connecticut and Michigan, and in 1905 in Maine), adult probation was slow in developing due to the judges' wide discretion to apply offenses and terms and conditions of probation (Abadinsky, 2009; Chute, 1933).

As more states enacted probation laws, restrictions were included that reduced the discretion of judges. In Massachusetts and the first few states to enact probation laws all offenders were eligible for probation. However, Chutes (1933) indicated that new states that enacted probation laws began to forbid probation for offenses punishable by more than ten years or life imprisonment or death. Furthermore, Chutes provided that some states restricted probation for certain serious offenses while others limited probation to misdemeanors or certain minor offenses. Moreover, variance in probation laws existed with some states forbidding probation for individuals with a previous felony or incarceration. According to Chutes, New York, specifically, enacted legislation forbidding individuals from being sentenced to probation if convicted of an offense involving a weapon or if the individual was a fourth offender. Although judges practiced implementing suspended sentences, it was not until the National Probation Act of 1925

passed that judges were legally granted the authority to suspend sentences and place offenders under probation supervision (Reichstein, 2015).

As crime rates peaked from the 1970s to 1990s, carceral solutions to crime replaced the focus of community supervision after researchers and policymakers questioned whether it is a true, rehabilitative alternative to incarceration (Cullen & Gendreau, 2000). During the 1980s and 1990s, the 'get tough on crime' and 'war on drugs' eras were birthed. Consequently, policymakers and correctional administrators favored legislation in support of punitive sentences (e.g., mandatory minimum sentencing laws, three-strike laws, and truth-in-sentencing laws) (Cullen & Gendreau, 2000). Varied by state, offenders received harsher sentences requiring more time to be served in prison and reducing the eligibility of probation and parole (Turner & Sundt, 1995). Thus, the prison population drastically increased, straining state and federal government budgets (Currie, 1998). However, the probation population also increased from one million adults being supervised under probation and parole in 1980 to nearly 4 million adults under probation supervision in the early 2000s (Austin & Irwin, 2012; Maruschak & Parks, 2012; Phelps & Curry, 2017; Sarre, 2001).

While community supervision was developed for the purpose of providing opportunities for 'reentry' it is also rooted in 'economic motivations' (Abadinsky, 1978). Resulting from a conjunction of a shift from rehabilitation and prison overcrowding, community supervision became 'control focused' (Taxman, 2002). Thus, PPOs emphasized adherence to conditions (e.g., reporting as directed, paying financial obligations, performing community service, and drug testing) over rehabilitation (e.g.,

assisting with obtaining employment) to deter offenders from future crime (Taxman, 2012).

Current Parole and Probation Laws

Current probation and parole laws focus on addressing the needs of the offender that reduce future crime. Furthering Rhode Island's approach to judging the offender not the offense (Reichstein, 2015) and studies indicating that control-focused supervision was not effective to reduce recidivism (Bonta & Andrews, 2015), states have enacted criminal justice reform laws to remedy deficiencies in the criminal justice system. In 2006, Justice Reinvestment Initiatives (JRIs) and criminal justice reform laws were passed throughout the United States (Bureau of Justice Assistance, n.d.). Similar to the restrictions on probation and previous laws implemented to harden criminal sentences, Pew Charitable Trusts (2018b) indicated that JRIs varied from state to state. However, each states' reform efforts focused on reducing recidivism. According to Pew Charitable Trusts, current criminal justice reform efforts focus on sentencing reform, reducing the prison and community corrections population, enhancing community supervision policies, and monitoring the success of reform efforts. Additionally, there has been an increased focus on nonviolent offenders resulting in some states revising laws to increase minimum thresholds for felony offenses and provided successful opportunities for non-violent felony offenders. There has been an 11% decrease in the state imprison rate since the inception of JRIs (Pew Charitable Trusts, 2018b). Justice Reinvestment Initiatives have resulted in prisons being reserved for violent offenders—the community is afraid of—rather than nonviolent offenders—the community disagree with or are mad at.

Probation and Parole Officers Address Criminogenic Needs

Community supervision organizations implemented EBPs such as the RNR model to have an increased reduction in recidivism and provide effective supervision to offenders (Andrews & Bonta, 2015; Reichstein, 2015; Viglione & Taxman, 2018). Andrews and Bonta (2015) provided that successful implementation of the RNR model has a positive (decreasing) impact on recidivism. Furthermore, Taxman (2014) found that a 3% to 6% reduction in the reincarceration rates can be achieved by adding the RNR principles in programming, expanding access to and participation in programs and ensuring offenders are matched to the right treatment programs. The implementation of EBPs has also resulted in states adopting supervision strategies (e.g., Supervision Training Initiative in Community Supervision, Effective Practices in Community Supervision, etc.) to train PPOs on how to effectively implement the RNR principles during offender case management (Reichstein, 2015).

The success of community supervision organizations' efforts to implement EBPs depends heavily on PPOs. PPOs are the frontline employees, or street-level bureaucrats, responsible for transitioning organizational evidence-based policies into practice. PPOs spend a vast amount of time conducting RNAs (Schaeffer & Williamson, 2018). However, youth and adult probation officers spend little time addressing criminogenic needs identified on RNAs during case management (Bonta et al., 2011; Haqanee et al., 2015). In a qualitative study to explore how adult PPOs used a validated RNA, Viglione et al. (2015) found that PPOs did not correctly administer the assessment. Furthermore, the authors found that PPOs administered the assessment differently. Moreover, PPOs

addressed needs that were not identified in RNA results that, if identified, would be considered criminogenic needs.

Although this study focuses on PPOs, this challenge expands beyond community supervision. Previous research provided that employees of correctional organizations that have implemented the RNR model did not refer offenders to treatment aligned with their RNA scores. For example, in a study conducted by Bosma et al. (2018), 26.8% of offenders referred to programs did not qualify according to their RNA score and 47.4% of offenders not referred to programs had criminogenic needs identified in their RNA results. This problem has social implications for community supervision organizations accomplishing their mission of providing effective supervision. Thus, identified needs pertinent to an offender's successful reintegration into the community may remain unaddressed during community supervision. Additionally, recidivism rates are impacted if criminogenic needs are not addressed to reduce the risk of reoffending.

Supervising Offenders Roles

The ambiguous roles of PPOs contribute to the problem of criminogenic needs not being addressed. Although PPOs are responsible for enforcing the sentences of the courts, they also work as a change agent to address the needs of offenders (Raynor, 2018; Sigler & McGraw, 1984). These contradicting roles lead to PPOs attempting to balance enforcement and treatment. Additionally, PPOs seek to balance satisfying the expectations of community supervision organizations, the judiciary, parole board, defense attorneys, prosecutors, and other law enforcement agencies (Chute, 1933; Sigler & McGraw, 1984; Viglione & Taxman, 2018). The expectations of criminal justice

authorities may not always be in sync with one another. For instance, Viglione and Taxman (2018) indicated that judges disagree with community supervision organizations' policies to supervise offenders at a low supervision level. The more diverse expectations others have of PPOs the greater degree of role conflict PPOs experience (Sigler & McGraw, 1984; Viglione & Taxman, 2018). As a result, PPOs make decisions that differ from organizational expectations and adoption of EBPs.

In addition to the expectations of authorities within the criminal justice system, the community's expectations present role conflicts for PPOs. For example, PPOs may not adhere to RNA results when supervising sex offenders, offenders with mental health conditions, and serious, violent offenders assessed at a low risk level due to the public's view of the offenders' offense type (Viglione & Taxman, 2018). PPOs support this compromise of organizational policy by the rationale that the offender is a danger to self or others (Klockars, 1972). Moreover, PPOs do not want to individually or collectively, with the organization, be held responsible for the reoffending of special populations. Thus, PPOs struggle to simultaneously meet the expectations of the organization by implementing EBPs and maintain the commitment to serve and protect the public.

Caseload Size

In addition to the challenge of ambiguous roles, PPOs are challenged with an incline in the community supervision population. In 2016, one in 55 offenders were under community supervision in the United States, that is a 239% increase from the 1980s (Pew Charitable Trusts, 2018a). This growth results in larger caseloads for PPOs to manage. The caseload size of PPOs varies according to the assigned caseload (Viglione &

Taxman, 2018). This variation in size has pushed PPOs caseloads over the national recommendations. Although Matz, Conley, and Johanneson (2018) indicated that caseload size may be a factor in PPOs addressing criminogenic needs and implementing EBPs, the National Council on Crime & Delinquency (2016) indicated that reducing the caseload size does not individually reduce recidivism. Moreover, in a multisite evaluation, Jalbert et al. (2011) found that sites with reduced caseload sizes that partially implemented EBPs had no impact on recidivism; whereas, combining caseload size reductions with successful implementation of EBPs lower recidivism rates. Therefore, caseload sizes may be a factor in PPOs' use of professional discretion that contradicts RNA scores.

In an effort to assist officers with implementing EBPs, community supervision organizations adopt supervision strategies to reduce caseload sizes. However, these policies may result in offenders' needs not being addressed. Viglione and Taxman (2018) found that 74% of low risk offenders were supervised via telephone monitoring. Consistent with previous research that indicated low risk offenders' risk of reoffending could increase with treatment, criminogenic needs identified for offenders supervised via telephone reporting were left unaddressed. The implementation of supervision strategies such as telephone monitoring to reduce caseload sizes can be rewarding for offenders and PPOs. However, these practices contradict the importance of addressing offenders' needs.

Supervision Strategies

Probation and Parole Officers adopt various strategies to supervise offenders. Klockars (1972) provided that these strategies are influenced by PPOs' perception of

their role. Among the perceived roles, Klockars indicated that the 'synthetic' officers provide the ideal supervision of offenders by combining the dual roles of supervision and treatment. Thus, achieving behavioral change and more positive outcomes than the *law enforcement officer* or *therapeutic agent*. PPOs' ambiguous roles lead to the adoption of individual routines and practices to meet organizational expectations (Lipsky, 2010). Therefore, PPOs use discretion in the decision-making of supervising offenders.

Lipsky (2010) established that a critical role of street-level bureaucrats, or frontline workers, is to exercise discretion during their interactions with clients. Although Klockars (1972) referred to addressing violations of probation conditions, he identified that PPOs have a level of discretion in identifying, applying, and disregarding rules. Officers use similar professional discretion with RNAs. Although the RNA scores an offender at a specific risk level, the officer may not supervise the offender as assessed. Viglione and Taxman (2018) provided that the reason for this deviation is PPOs' perception that the offender's criminal history or current mental status does not permit the offender to be supervised at the assessed risk level. This was demonstrated in a study conducted by Viglione and Taxman with probation officers refusing to place offenders on *unsupervised probation* who were mental health or a sex offender, although the offender was assessed as low risk. As street-level bureaucrats, PPOs usually have to make immediate decisions that focus on the needs of the individual they are working with at that time. As a result, PPOs use discretion that are not consistent with policies to assist offenders with needs that are known by the PPO but may not have been identified by RNAs.

The use of discretion stems from various angles of PPOs' experiences and desired experiences in community corrections. Viglione and Taxman (2018) found that PPOs intentionally used discretion over organizational policies and RNA results in supervising offenders. Although rehabilitative services should ultimately be determined by the RNA, the experience of community corrections professions plays a role in the referral decision-making of offenders to rehabilitative services (Andrews, Bonta, & Hoge, 1990). Schaeffer and Williamson (2018) found that experienced PPOs attribute case management decisions according to their familiarity and realization of the work that are not aligned with RNAs. Furthermore, PPOs with a longer employment history in the criminal justice field were more likely to compromise work practices and attitudes (Schaeffer & Williamson, 2018; Lipsky, 2010). These compromises add structural constraints to community supervision organizations.

Lack of Resources

External factors such as a lack of resources contribute to the constraints of PPOs implementing EBPs by addressing the criminogenic needs of offenders. Street-level bureaucrats are challenged in implementing organizational policies and practices by a lack of resources that prevent informed-decisions to be made in the best interest of individual clients (Lipsky, 2010). Additionally, the label of *convict* or *offender* is harmful to individuals (Klockars, 1972). Not only is this a problem for adult PPOs addressing the needs of adult felony offenders, but also to juvenile PPOs addressing the criminogenic needs of youth offenders. Haqanee et al. (2015) found that juvenile probation officers failed to address criminogenic needs of delinquent juveniles due to a lack of resources.

Moreover, Haqanee et al. found that when resources were available, community organizations were not willing to work with the juvenile offender population. As a result of labels, available resources for individuals under community supervision are minimal. Considering the restricted community resources available to individuals with criminal-related labels, PPOs who strive to adhere to EBPs implemented by community supervision organizations may be unsuccessful.

Partnerships with community resources are vital in community supervision organizations addressing the needs of offenders. Offenders have multiple needs such as housing, employment, and substance abuse (Andrews & Bonta, 2015). However, the limited funding of community supervision organizations restrains PPOs from providing services for offenders to successfully reintegrate into the community (Travis, 2000). To make a meaningful contribution to reducing recidivism, PPOs have to be engaged in their local communities. However, there are not equal opportunities in the communities for PPOs to assist offenders.

Resources vary among geographical locations which may hinder PPOs from making appropriate or necessary referrals. According to Ethridge, Boston, Dunlap, and Staten (2014), the challenges of resources in rural and urban areas differ for offenders reentering into the community. For instance, Staton-Tindall et al. (2015) found that individuals in urban areas were 2.4 times more likely to recidivate than individuals in rural areas. Additionally, urban recidivists were in the community for a shorter period of time with an average of 184.8 days compared to 210.4 days for rural recidivists. Furthermore, Bunting et al. (2019) and Staton-Tindall et al. found that living in less

urban, or rural areas, have a negative association with recidivism. Although Ethridge et al. indicated that rural areas have fewer reentry services than urban areas, Holzer, Raphael, and Stoll (2001) reported that 60% of urban employers would not be willing to hire someone with a criminal background. PPOs should focus on addressing the criminogenic need of employment to reduce recidivism, considering the odds against offenders in urban areas and the fact that urban and rural recidivists were less likely to be employed. In addition to the geographical barriers, employment resources for convicted felons are limited by federal laws.

The labels associated with individuals under community supervision (e.g., criminal, convicted felon, probationer, parolee, offender) results in civil punishment that extends beyond the sentence ordered by judges. Consequently, PPOs are hindered from addressing the needs of offenders. Although PPOs are responsible for reintegrating offenders into the community by addressing needs such as employment, some states restrict licensing those with a felony background. Therefore, many parolees who completed trades in prison (e.g., barber, cosmetology, plumber, electrical contractor) in hopes for a seamless transition to the community are not able to secure employment in the studied field (Hull, 2006). Furthermore, it is difficult to address education and family needs as many convicted felons are ineligible for public housing, student loans, food stamps, and other forms of public assistance (Alexander, 2010; Simon, 2007). Consequently, street-level bureaucrats, or PPOs, encounter obstacles implementing EBPs in case management by addressing needs on various levels.

Organizational Policy and Assessment Results

Although community supervision organizations use an actuarial, validated RNA to identify how to effectively supervise offenders, policies are implemented that require PPOs to override the results for certain offenders. Organizational policies that contradict RNAs present an acceptance of deviation from or lack of accuracy in assessment scores. For example, sex offenders may be assessed as low-risk but organizational policy may require the probation officer to override the assessed score to a higher level of supervision (Viglione & Taxman, 2018). Wormith, Hogg, and Guzzo (2012) found that PPOs used overrides with sexual offenders (35.1%) more than non-sexual (15.1%). Furthermore, the authors found that overrides were used more often to increase risk levels (14.9%) than to decrease (1.6%). Similar to adult PPOs, juvenile PPOs used overrides to increase the supervision levels of 74% of sexual and 41.6% of non-sexual youth offenders (Schmidt, Sinclair, & Thomasdóttir, 2016). Although PPOs use overrides based on organizational policies and professional discretion, periodically PPOs seek to adhere to RNA results or reward offenders by reducing risk levels.

Street-level bureaucrats seek to benefit the citizens they serve, despite deviations. However, when PPOs attempt to adhere to RNA results for special populations such as sex offenders, supervisors may deny the request (Viglione & Taxman, 2018). This organizational contradiction of the RNA is similar to the contradicting expectations of the roles of PPOs. Furthermore, these formal contradictions reduce PPOs' trust in RNAs. In interviews conducted with PPOs on administering and adhering to RNAs, only one of 42 PPOs reported trusting the assessment and the results (Viglione et al., 2015).

Furthermore, 42% reported mistrust in the accuracy of the RNA measuring risks and needs. Therefore, PPOs feel justified when their use of discretion contradicts expectations of community supervision organizations.

Summary and Conclusion

Drawing from the street-level bureaucracy, RNR, and labeling theories, the current study explored the perceptions of PPOs in addressing criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders. A review of probation and parole history provided that rehabilitation is the foundation of community supervision. Changes in laws shifted community supervision's focus from rehabilitation to punishment. However, research indicated that punitive approaches are not effective. As a result, rehabilitation was rebirthed in community corrections with a focus on EBPs.

Community supervision organizations adopted EBPs based on the RNR model to provide effective supervision to offenders and reduce recidivism. As a result, actuarial, validated RNAs were implemented to identify (a) offenders' risk of reoffending with PPOs focusing on high-risk offenders, (b) what PPOs should focus on when supervising offenders to reduce the risk (criminogenic needs), and (c) how PPOs should supervise offenders according to their individual needs and characteristics (Andrews & Bonta, 2015). Andrews and Bonta (2015) indicated that supervising offenders according to the RNR model resulted in a decrease in recidivism. Nevertheless, community supervision organizations have struggled with successfully implementing the model.

Extensive research has been conducted indicating that PPOs, as frontline workers, do not implement EBPs adopted by community supervision organizations. Specifically,

PPOs fail to adhere to RNA results in case management to address the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders (Bonta et al., 2011; Haqanee et al., 2015; Schaeffer & Williamson, 2018; Viglione et al., 2015). Although many researchers have identified that adult PPOs are challenged in the area of addressing criminogenic needs, the perception of PPOs who supervise adult felony offenders has not been considered. Haqanee et al. (2015) explored the perceptions of juvenile of PPOs addressing the criminogenic needs of juvenile offenders. However, the authors noted that juvenile and adult offenders have diverse needs. Furthermore, Viglione et al. (2015) conducted a qualitative study to explore adult PPOs use of an actuarial, validated RNA and found that while PPOs conduct assessments, they do not integrate the results into case management. Thus, the authors suggested for future research to be conducted on how PPOs implement assessment tools. Therefore, it is appropriate for this study to explore the perceptions of PPOs who supervise and address the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders.

PPOs are street-level bureaucrats who interact with offenders as their primary duty. These interactions result in officer-offender relationships that divulge offenders' needs that are not identified on RNAs. Therefore, PPOs use experience and discretion to refer offenders to programming to address needs that are criminogenic in nature but not according to assessment results. Furthermore, a lack of resources prohibits PPOs from addressing criminogenic needs that are identified. Expanding on the challenges PPOs encounter, the bureaucracies of organizational policies demonstrate acceptance of deviating from RNA scores. For these reasons, the lived experience of PPOs addressing

the criminogenic needs of offenders provided insight into whether PPOs adhere to EBPs implemented by community supervision organizations and RNA results.

Chapter 3 will discuss the methodology and research design chosen for this study. The following will be presented: research design and rationale, role of the researcher, participant selection, instrumentation, data collection, data analysis, issue of trustworthiness and ethical procedures. Finally, the chapter will conclude with a summary and preview of Chapter 4.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative study using a phenomenological design was to explore the lived experiences of PPOs addressing criminogenic needs among adult felony offenders. The results of this study may have social change implications for community supervision organizations that serve adult felony offenders and have a mission to reduce recidivism. Additionally, this study may provide relevant information to inform policy revisions to enhance PPOs' adherence to RNAs as prescribed and make appropriate referrals according to RNA results.

Chapter 3 discusses the methodology and research design chosen for the study. The following will be presented: research design and rationale, role of the researcher, participant selection, instrumentation, data collection, data analysis, issues of trustworthiness, and ethical procedures. Finally, this chapter concludes with a summary and preview of Chapter 4.

Research Design and Rationale

This study employed a qualitative inquiry with a phenomenological design, which is appropriate for gaining insight into PPOs' lived experiences. Although quantitative research can be generalized across populations, it only exposes the surface. Nonetheless, a limitation of qualitative research is that it is not generalizable (Patton, 2015). Therefore, the findings of qualitative research can only be associated with the sample of the study, but qualitative research opens opportunities for future research and a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of interest.

For this qualitative phenomenological study, the experiences of PPOs addressing the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders under community supervision were explored. The research question guiding this research study was: What are the lived experiences of PPOs addressing the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders?

Organizations have implemented EBPs to provide effective supervision of adult felony offenders and reduce recidivism, but these organizations are not the only factor in successful implementation (Haqanee et al., 2015). Therefore, the phenomenon of interest was the perception of PPOs, as frontline workers, implementing organizational practices by addressing the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders. Although PPOs administer RNAs, PPOs have not administered or used RNAs as prescribed (Viglione et al., 2015). According to Bosma et al. (2018), PPOs have made treatment program referrals to address offender needs that were not identified on RNAs. Bosma et al. also found that PPOs neglected to make referrals for RNA needs that were identified. Offenders are significantly less likely to reoffend if PPOs successfully implement EBPs (Andrews & Bonta, 2015), so there was a need for emphasis on PPOs' experience in addressing criminogenic needs.

A qualitative methodology was used for this study. According to Patton (2015), qualitative research examines the reality of people to capture and understand their perspectives that shape their behavior. Qualitative research considers multiple realities and points of view while evaluating the phenomenon for a greater comprehension of individuals and encounters (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). The qualitative methodology allows for the phenomenon to be studied through open-ended interview questions (Yin, 2014).

Therefore, the qualitative method was appropriate for this research to explore the lived experiences of PPOs addressing the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders.

This study's research design included a phenomenological approach to explore the lived experiences of PPOs addressing criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders. Phenomenological qualitative research is conducted when there is little or no research on a phenomenon (Rudestam & Newton, 2015). A review of previous literature indicated that the majority of researchers have considered PPOs adhering to RNAs from a quantitative perspective (Schaeffer & Williamson, 2018). Those researchers recommended that future research be conducted on the experiences of PPOs adhering to RNAs and addressing the criminogenic needs of offenders. Qualitative research exists on juvenile PPOs addressing criminogenic needs and the reasons PPOs have not adhered to RNAs, but there is limited research on the current study's phenomenon of interest.

PPOs have a duty to assist offenders with reintegrating into the community. There has been an increased focus on the community supervision population due to its consistent growth (Pew Charitable Trusts, 2018a). Additionally, the adoption of EBPs by community supervision organizations has implied a need to focus on assisting offenders with underlying causes of offending, which initiates and returns individuals to the criminal justice system. A phenomenological approach to this study permitted an understanding of the perspectives of PPOs regarding the mission of community supervision organizations. While others may adopt strategies to accomplish the goal of reducing crime and recidivism, the experiences of the individuals carrying out the

strategies are vital to accomplishing goals and ensuring the strategies are feasible to implement.

Role of the Researcher

The role of the researcher was to engage study participants through professional interviews that lead to the disclosure of thoughts and feelings. In qualitative research, the role of the researcher is to be an instrument for data collection (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Data are collected through a human instrument in qualitative studies rather than through technology, databases, or questionnaires. Additionally, the role of the researcher is to observe social, or nonverbal, cues to interpret during data analysis (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). I actively participated during the interviews to identify opportunities to develop an emergent process. To this end, I requested participants to expound on their responses and social cues for accurate interpretation and meaning that may unearth new themes.

Applicable issues included my knowledge of supervising adult felony offenders, as I hold a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and am a certified PPO. Although I am a supervisor at a community supervision organization, the four employees I supervise are not PPOs. Therefore, individuals I supervise were excluded from the research study. As a scholar-practitioner, I had no previous or current relationship with any of the participants in this study. Regardless of my educational background and professional experience, the perspectives of the participants were the focus of this research study. Therefore, a semistructured approach of asking follow-up questions assisted with understanding the participants' terminology, thoughts, feelings, behavioral responses, and ultimately, their lived experiences. During the interview, I used open-ended and probing questions in a

nonthreatening, noncoercive manner. Furthermore, I refrained from leading participants to certain responses through indirect or implied agreement or disagreement with responses. Additionally, I did not share personal stories, beliefs, or experiences with the participants to influence responses.

The role of the researcher is to have awareness of preconceived thoughts about the phenomenon of interest and the study participants. Positionality refers to the social and political perspectives that comprise a researcher regarding race, class, sex, sexuality, and capacity status (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). I conducted self-reflections to ensure that personal views and professional experiences did not overshadow data collected. I maintained a research journal to document observations and views during data collection and to self-reflect to remain neutral during the interview process. Furthermore, I managed biases through communicating with my committee chair.

Methodology

Participant Selection Logic

The participants included in this study were PPOs who currently or previously supervised adult felony offenders in a southeastern state. A nonprobabilistic purposive sampling approach was used to select participants. Purposive sampling is a qualitative sampling strategy that selects cases that provide specific, detailed information related to the purpose of the study (Patton, 2015). Snowball sampling was also used to recruit participants. Snowball sampling is when a researcher requests participants to recruit other qualifying participants (Patton, 2015).

For this study, participants met at least two basic criteria: (a) had experience as a probation and/or parole officer in a southeastern state, and (b) had experience with linking adult felony offenders with resources to reduce their risk of reoffending. To confirm that participants met the criteria, the study criteria were included in the social media recruitment post (see Appendix B). The study participants consisted of six PPOs.

Upon receipt of Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval (approval #11-08-19-0072407), I created a social media page on Facebook and shared it on Facebook and LinkedIn to target PPOs who have supervised adult felony offenders. The social media page included the study's informed consent via a website link to gather the participants' consent to participate and participants' contact information, such as e-mail address and telephone number. I scheduled interviews at the participants' convenience. Data saturation was obtained through conducting interviews to the extent that new themes were not occurring. According to Guest et al. (2006), data saturation is reached between six to 12 interviews.

Instrumentation

I received written permission via e-mail to use and modify an interview instrument from a previous study conducted by Haqanee et al. (2015). The instrument aligned with the concepts and variables studied in that it focused on PPOs addressing the criminogenic needs of youth. There were some modifications in that the term *youth* was exchanged for the term *adult* or *offender*.

Participants were interviewed using in-depth, semistructured interviews with a modified version of the interview tool. Interviews provide self-report information from

the participants of the study (Rudestam & Newton, 2015). Although face-to-face interviews are the most common interview method, technology has increased interview options for researchers (Opdenakker, 2006). Telephone interviews were conducted with the use of Zoom conference calls. Opdenakker (2006) provided that an advantage to interviews conducted with the use of technology is the diversity in geographic locations for the researcher and interviewees. Telephone interviews permitted me to reach individuals in diverse geographical locations.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

As previously stated, purposive sampling was used to recruit participants. Purposive sampling ensures the participants of the study have experienced the phenomenon of interest for the study. Approval from Walden's IRB was obtained prior to recruiting study participants. Upon obtaining approval, I created a social media page that included the informed consent. On the social media page, a post was created that informed individuals of the purpose of the study and that participation was voluntary. I contacted individuals who consented participation via e-mail to schedule interviews.

The primary data collection method for this study was telephone interviews. According to Seidman (2012), interviews are the primary method of data collection in phenomenological research. In-depth individual, semistructured interviews were conducted to understand how PPOs make meaning of their experiences in addressing the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders. Seidman indicated that in-depth individual interviews were beneficial to understand how that meaning affects individuals in carrying out that experience. Therefore, in-depth individual interviews were an appropriate data

collection method for this study to obtain a wealth of knowledge about the phenomenon of interest.

Collecting data from participants by interviews provide the opportunity for researchers to gather more data for analysis (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Likewise, Kaplowitz (2001) provided that interviews permit the opportunity to gather detailed descriptions of events and probe for additional information through follow-up questions. Therefore, this study used a semistructured interview process with predetermined interview questions (see Appendix C) to guide the interview process. The interview questions were aligned with the qualitative, phenomenological design through the use of open-ended questions and, when necessary, I asked subsequent probing questions. Follow-up interviews provide the opportunity to ask previous interviewees questions that may arise in later interviews or to clarify discrepancies (Jacob & Furgeson, 2012). Therefore, I requested permission to contact the participants, verbally or written, after the initial interviews for follow-up questions. However, the aim of the data collection was to fully understand the phenomenon during initial interviews. Therefore, follow-up interviews were not necessary.

Prior to conducting the interview, I reviewed the informed consent with interviewees prior to the interview and offered a copy, explained the goal of the study, and answered any questions. Participants were reminded that participation was voluntary and there would not be a penalty or punishment for not participating in the study or if the participant selected to withdraw from participation after beginning the study. Participants were ensured that privacy would be maintained through assigning an alias to the

participants to conceal their identity. According to Ravitch and Carl (2016), utilizing an alias masks the identify of participants during data collection and with direct quotes within the study. Additionally, PPOs were informed that the interview would be approximately 60 minutes in length and consisted of 12 interview questions. Interviews were conducted over a period of 3 weeks.

As the interviewer, I obtained permission from the interviewees to record the interview with the use of Zoom conference call recording feature. Recording interviews combined with notetaking assists researchers in identifying the accuracy of transcripts and interpretations (Opdenakker, 2006). I observed the tone and speech of participants to gather data and cues to identify the comfort of the participants during the interview. At the termination of the interview, I debriefed with participants to allow questions to be asked and informed that a brochure of the study's results will be shared with participants.

Data Analysis Plan

According to Patton (2015), phenomenological analysis identifies and explains the meaning, development, and importance of a lived experience of a phenomenon for a person or group of people. Therefore, the perception of lived experiences may differ among individuals and from mainstream society (Patton, 2015). Consequently, I practiced reflective journaling to remove bias and become aware of beliefs, opinions, and knowledge of the phenomenon. My knowledge of the phenomenon was recognized, documented during journaling, and abandoned to provide validity.

NVivo 12, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software, was used to transcribe, organize, and analyze the collected data. I reviewed NVivo 12 transcribed

outputs for accuracy prior to organizing and analyzing the data. I read the transcripts multiple times for familiarity purposes and note-taking. There were no discrepancies identified in interviews. Therefore, participants were not contacted for a follow-up interview.

Initially, the interview questions were organized based on the research question. Organizing interview responses according to research questions assist with ensuring data analysis is aligned with the purpose of the research, which is consistent with the research design (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2014). Subsequently, the transcripts were read again for the purpose of general coding according to the exact responses of the respondents with the use of NVivo 12. After each transcript was analyzed in this manner and 'emergent themes' were developed, the emergent themes were clustered to link aspects of each respondent's lived experience. Patterns were then identified once all transcripts were examined closely to ensure that each participant's lived experience maintained its original meaning. The patterns created master themes.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is developed at the beginning of qualitative research and should be carried out throughout the research (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Developing trustworthiness in qualitative research requires credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility refers to the confidence of truth in the research findings (Macnee & McCabe, 2008). In other words, credibility refers to whether the research findings accurately reflect the accounts of the study participants. Credibility was established through reflexivity, member checking, and peer examination. As previously

mentioned, I used a research journal to remove personal bias, opinions, beliefs, and views of the phenomenon of interest. Thus, the research findings were solely based on how participants have experienced and made meaning of the phenomenon. Furthermore, I used member checking with a third-party to ensure the analysis and interpretation of participants' lived experiences are accurately reflected. Additionally, member checking ensured I did not include personal bias in the research findings. Member checking is the foundation of qualitative research, as the study directly reflects the lived experiences of the respondents (Anney, 2014). Finally, credibility was established through peer examination with the Dissertation Committee to obtain professional guidance to improve the quality of the research findings (Anney, 2014).

Differing from generalizability in quantitative research, transferability in qualitative research does not seek to generalize outcomes to a population. However, transferability refers to the ability of the research findings to be used by the readers (Anney, 2014; Macnee & McCabe, 2008). Transferability was established through providing a thick description of the research purpose, methodology, and data collection and analysis. Additionally, purposive sampling was used to ensure the study participants provide relevant, valuable, and plentiful information pertaining to the phenomenon to develop themes. According to Macnee and McCabe (2008), the use of purposive sampling assisted with providing a thick description. Thus, individuals of other settings and groups not participating in the study would be able to identify with the findings of the study.

Dependability and confirmability are similar in that they both determine whether the research findings are consistent and can be repeated by other researchers. To establish dependability, I used code agreement, or coded and recoded the data, to identify if the same themes emerged. According to Lacey and Luff (2009), coding and recoding is a necessary stage of the qualitative data analysis process. Similarly, Anney (2014) indicated that if there is agreement in the codes then dependability is enhanced. Additionally, I used the strategy of an audit trail to develop dependability and confirmability. Anney provided that audit trails are the ongoing documentation of the research process, specifically the decisions of the data collection and analysis.

Ethical Procedures

Throughout the research process, I was cognizant of ethical considerations. Prior to recruiting participants and data collection, approval was obtained from Walden University's IRB. The IRB was established to assist with reviewing data collection by students for ethical purposes. This review assisted with protecting the researcher and the participants. Therefore, a detailed description of the data collection has been articulated in the methods section of this Chapter. All IRB ethical procedures were followed.

As described in the data collection section of this chapter, participants were provided a copy of the informed consent and acknowledge the informed consent electronically. Additionally, I requested permission to electronically record interviews. All participants of the study were assured confidentiality, and no unnecessary personal identifying information was gathered. Access to all data were restricted to the researcher and dissertation committee and maintained in a secure location. The results of the study

were reported using aliases to maintain the confidentiality of participants. Participation was completely voluntary. Therefore, individuals could choose not to participate or end participation at any time with no penalty or punishment.

Confidentiality for PPOs and their employer was an ethical concern. One reason for this concern was that PPOs are provided confidential information during supervision and case management of adult felony offenders. Additionally, PPOs may have divulged information pertaining to individual work ethics, routines, and employers that, if known, could risk their employment. To preserve confidentiality, participants were assigned an identifier that would not expose the identity nor employer. Only basic information and demographics of PPOs were obtained to ensure compliance with participant criteria. Furthermore, to preserve PPOs' employers, the name and specific location of employers were not identified. Specifically, the employers of participants were masked to indicate a *southeastern state* rather than the actual employer or specific state. Participants were provided the opportunity to inquire about confidentiality.

Given that participating participants' identity were concealed, there were little to no risks for recording interviews and collecting data. Furthermore, this study was independent of any of the participants' employer. Therefore, the risk of employer retaliation was minimized by previously described research protections. Although minimal risk was associated with this study and no traumatic experiences were expected, the participants were offered contact information for their local community service board to receive access to cost effective mental health providers. Participants were provided the opportunity to inquire about confidentiality.

The dissertation and all electronic notes were maintained on my password-protected private external hard drive and secured in a fireproof safe (restricted to the researcher) when not in use. A backup was maintained in a private electronic location with a secure login and password and two-step verification. I made every effort to ensure the privacy and rights of the study participants and any others involved with the study. The participants were informed of the data collection and storage in advance. If requested by participants, reasonable accommodations for data storage would have been made. However, no participants made a special request. After completion of the research, all information was stored in the same secure, restricted locations. After 5 years, I will destroy all material pertaining to the research study, leaving no traceable files of the original data collected.

Finally, participants were informed that a brochure with the study's results will be provided. There were no unexpected ethical considerations. Therefore, I did not have to consult with the dissertation committee for ethical considerations.

Additional ethical considerations were my previous education, knowledge, and experience in the criminal justice field, specifically within community supervision. Therefore, I was aware of my personal and professional views on the responses provided by study participants. Furthermore, I was open to learning about the study topic through a different lens, that of the study participants. I refrained from passing judgment during the data collection phase of interviews. This practice assisted me in being receptive of the data collected rather than disregarding data collection based on previous education and professional experience.

Summary

Chapter 3 explained the planned research design along with a rationale. The role of the researcher and applicable ethical issues was discussed. Professionalism was maintained during interviews. Additionally, open-ended questions were asked during the interview to refrain from leading participants to certain responses. Information pertaining to participants, instrumentation, data analysis, issues of trustworthiness, and ethical procedures was provided. This chapter also provided an outline of the methodology employed in the study. The qualitative inquiry with a phenomenological tradition was more applicable for addressing the lived experiences of PPOs. All ethical guidelines were adhered to, as well as, confidentiality was maintained for participants. The results of the study will be presented in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

Community supervision organizations have adopted the RNR model to provide adequate supervision of adult felony offenders. Previous research has quantitatively identified that PPOs do not adhere to RNAs as prescribed by EBPs when addressing the needs of offenders. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of PPOs implementing the RNR model by addressing criminogenic needs among adult felony offenders. This chapter contains the results of the qualitative phenomenological study conducted to answer the research question: What are the lived experiences of PPOs addressing the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders?

This chapter also includes a discussion of the analysis conducted. Additionally, it provides that the analysis was consistent with the study's theoretical framework and methodology. Furthermore, it provides how the investigation relates to the research question. Finally, this chapter offers illustrations of sample demographics through the use of tables.

Setting

Data were collected from participants through in-depth, semistructured interviews. The setting of the interviews was via telephone with the use of Zoom conference calls. I provided each participant with an interview time, conference call number, and a unique Meeting ID to participate in the interview. Although face-to-face interviews are the preferred method of data collection for qualitative research, telephone

interviews are also a standard method (Novick, 2008; Opdenakker, 2006). Participants may have been more willing to share their experiences via telephone interviews, but nonverbal social cues were not observable. Therefore, I used participant tone and voice inflection to maintain social cues during the interpretation of the study results. There were no organizational or personal conditions that influenced the participants or their experiences, directly or indirectly, at the time of the study that may have affected the results of the inquiry.

Demographics

Six participants were interviewed for this study. Both probation officers and parole officers were represented, with five (83%) probation officers and one (17%) parole and probation officer. All participants had experience with addressing the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders, as defined in this dissertation.

The total years of experience in the probation and parole profession varied among the six participants. Those participants with 30 years or more of experience represented 33% of the sample size. Participants with 11–20 years of experience represented 50%, and one (17%) of the participants did not provide the years of experience.

All participants shared race information, with the majority (83%) identifying as Black or African-American and one (17%) identifying as White or Caucasian. The ages of participants varied. Participants who were 51 years old or above represented 67% of the sample; 17% were 41–50 years old. The 31–40 age group was also 17% of the sample. There were five female participants (83%) and one male participant (17%) in the sample. The demographics of participants are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Total participants	6
Profession	
Probation officer	5
Probation and parole officer	1
Years of experience	
11–20 years	3
30 years or above	2
Not reported	1
Race	
African American	5
Caucasian	1
Age	
31–40 years old	1
41–50 years old	1
51 years old or above	4
Gender	
Female	5
Male	1

Data Collection

After Walden University's IRB approval was granted, I recruited participants and collected data from six participants who met the inclusion criteria. The primary source of data collection were six in-depth, semistructured interviews with individuals who were current or former PPOs. After reviewing the informed consent form and consenting to participate in the study, each participant was contacted via e-mail to schedule individual interviews. I conducted in-depth, semistructured telephone interviews for each participant via Zoom conference calls using a modified version of an instrument from a previous study (Haqanee et al., 2015). A unique Meeting ID was provided to each participant to

maintain confidentiality and privacy. Before starting the interview, each participant consented for the interview to be recorded. The interviews were recorded through the Zoom recording feature. The length of the interviews was an average of 25 to 30 minutes. The interviews were conducted for a period of 3 weeks. There was no deviation from the data collection plan presented in Chapter 3. Additionally, there were no unusual circumstances in data collection.

Data Analysis

After each interview was conducted, I used NVivo Transcription to perform a verbatim transcription of the data. I then intelligently transcribed the interviews to ensure accuracy and to become engaged with the data. According to Patton (2015), transcribing some or all interviews provides an opportunity for researchers to become immersed in the data. After I transcribed the interviews, I organized the interview transcripts according to the interview questions in an Excel spreadsheet to create a data set. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), a data set is the data contained in the corpus that will be analyzed. The data set was uploaded into NVivo 12 data analysis software and auto-coded by interview questions and cases, or participants. Table 2 below identifies the coding of each interview question.

Table 2

Interview Questions

Question number	Question
Q1	What is your race?
Q2	What is your age range?
Q3–Q3B	Tell me about yourself. Were you a probation or parole officer? Are you currently in that position?
Q4	Tell me about the reason you entered the profession of a probation/parole officer.
Q5–Q5A	Tell me about your job duties as a probation/parole officer. Based on your job duties, tell me what do you view as the primary focus or goal of being a probation/parole officer.
Q6–Q6A	What term do you use for the individuals you supervise? Is there a different term used when linking individuals with resources?
Q7–Q7A	Which criminogenic needs, in your experience, are easier to address? What factors do you think account for this?
Q8–Q8A	Which criminogenic needs, in your experience, have proven challenging to address? What factors do you think account for this?
Q9	Out of the needs that are identified using the risk-need assessment tool, which needs do you think are more central to ensuring that the probationer/parolee does not reoffend?
Q10–Q10D	What is your experience with addressing adults' attitudes and cognitions? How do you deal with this challenge/address it typically? Is this method effective? Do you refer to any particular programs? How effective do you find these referrals?
Q11–Q11A	Have there been instances where you have had to prioritize addressing certain identified needs over others? Has this situation ever happened where you have had to prioritize noncriminogenic needs, due to the relevance for an individual offender, that were contrary to that indicated by their risk-need assessment?
Q12	What, if any, are some personal challenges that adults are presented with that influence the success of these adults completing programming or treatment targeting their needs?

I conducted a cross-case analysis using open coding to identify patterns in the participants' responses to the interview questions. Cross-case or cross-interview analysis

are the analyses of different perspectives on central issues or common questions (Patton, 2015). I identified preliminary, or initial, codes from the raw data.

Thematic analysis was then conducted using Braun and Clarke's six phases of thematic analysis. I read the interview transcripts multiple times to gain a stronger knowledge of the data. After several readings of the responses and analyzing the data, additional initial codes were identified. I conducted data reduction by collapsing the data into categories; parent and child nodes were created in NVivo 12. The categories allowed for the data to be analyzed efficiently. Emergent themes and descriptions were created from the readings and data analysis to bring meaning to the experiences of the probation and parole officers addressing the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders. I then reviewed, revised, and refined the themes to provide an accurate representation of the data and theoretical framework. The essence of each theme was identified and captured.

There were three themes identified: (a) individual-centric factors, (b) organizational-centric factors, and (c) inherent-centric factors. Individual-centric factors are issues primarily related to or within the control of the individual under community supervision. Organizational-centric factors are issues within the organization or criminal justice system. Inherent-centric factors are environmental issues (e.g., lack of support from family or negative childhood environment). According to Saldana (2016), three key issues of a study should be identified after the second cycle of coding. I identified 14 subthemes. There were no discrepant cases. Table 3 details the themes and subthemes for PPOs' experience in addressing the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders.

Table 3

Summary of Themes and Subthemes

Themes	Subthemes	Description	Sources (data sets)	References
Individual-centric factors	Financial	Transportation, housing, food, ability to afford treatment	1	7
	Medical disabilities	Inability to attend programming due to physical/mental health disabilities; includes substance abuse	1	10
	Mental illness stigma	Individual or family resistance to mental health services or lack of knowledge about services	1	3
	Offender's ability	Learning level; comprehension ability	1	3
	Offenders' motivation and attitudes	Poor attitude; angry at the criminal justice system; lack of motivation; defensive	1	12
	Antisocial associates and environment	Inability to influence leisure activities during unstructured time and peers.	1	5
Organizational-centric factors	In-house resources	Programs within the organization or office; easy access to resources	1	9
	Community partnerships	External stakeholders in the community that provide resources to address offenders' needs	1	5
	Concreteness of need	Needs easily identified and monitored; PPOs have direct ability to assist in connecting with resources	1	6
	Labeling	Reference to individuals with terms that impact rehabilitation	1	14
	Prioritize noncriminogenic needs	Basic needs prioritized over criminogenic needs	1	32
	Dual roles	Prioritizing multiple roles, such as law enforcement and counselor	1	14
Inherent-centric factors	Lack of family support	Need someone to provide encouragement, affirmations, and believe in them	1	10
	Longstanding problems	Problems existed for an extended period of time from childhood (e.g., trauma, substance abuse) and are a result of the environment	1	2

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness was developed at the beginning of the research study and carried out throughout the research. Developing trustworthiness in qualitative research requires credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was established through reflexivity, member checking, and peer examination. As previously mentioned, I used a research journal to remove personal bias, opinions, beliefs, and views on the phenomenon of interest. The research findings were solely based on how participants have experienced and made meaning of addressing the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders.

I used member checking with a third-party to ensure the analysis and interpretation of participants' lived experiences were accurately reflected. Additionally, member checking provided that I did not include personal bias in the research findings. Finally, credibility was established through peer examination with my dissertation committee to obtain professional guidance to improve the quality of the research findings.

Transferability was established by providing a detailed description of the research purpose, methodology, and data collection and analysis. Additionally, purposive sampling was used to ensure the study participants provided relevant, valuable, and adequate information about the phenomenon to develop themes. To establish dependability, I used code agreement or coded and recoded the data, to identify if the same themes emerged. According to Lacey and Luff (2009), coding and recoding is a necessary stage of the qualitative data analysis process. Similarly, Anney (2014)

indicated that if there is an agreement in the codes, then dependability is enhanced. Additionally, I used the strategy of an audit trail to develop dependability and confirmability.

Results

Individual-Centric Factors

Individual-centric factors is an umbrella term used in this dissertation to describe the issues primarily related to or within the control of the individual under community supervision. Although PPOs seek to address the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders, PPOs identified that some aspects of addressing the needs were dependent upon the individual. Therefore, there are factors at the individual, offender level that impact PPOs' efforts. There were six open codes assigned to the umbrella term of individual-centric factors (see Figure 4).

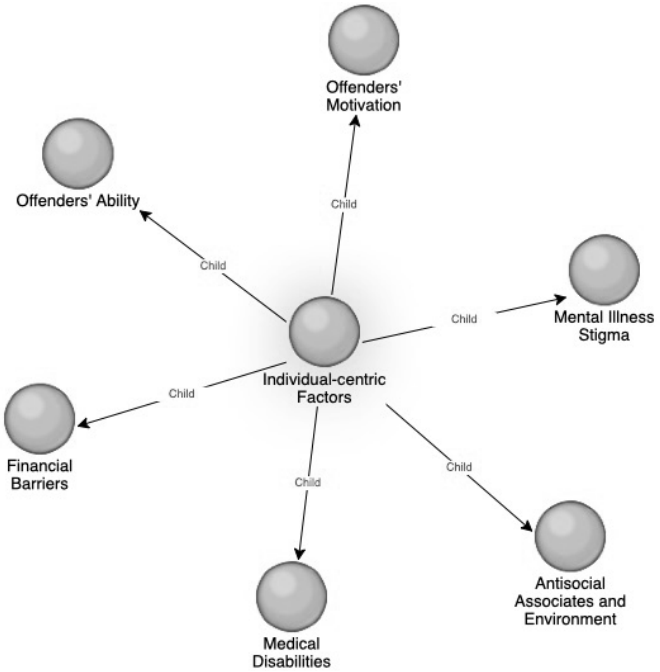

Figure 4. Individual-centric factor codes.

Financial barriers. Financial barriers refer to obstacles dependent upon finances that restrict an offender from beginning treatment or attending treatment or programs once referred by PPOs. Additionally, financial barriers interfere with offenders focusing on treatment or programming they have been referred to by PPOs.

When asked about the personal challenges adult felony offenders are presented with that influence the success of completing programming or treatment targeting their needs, one participant shared that basic necessities were a particular challenge for offenders:

> It goes back to them having housing, them having clothes, them having a place to take a bath, them having a place to eat. Those are some of the things that are challenging to them in the beginning. So, you have to try to help them with those needs in order for them to move forward.

Although PPOs have access to resources that assist offenders with the criminogenic need for employment, one participant shared that financial barriers interfere as it relates to offenders having transportation:

> A lot of times the biggest thing that you have a problem with is transportation. A lot of probationers don't drive, or they don't have access to the bus line, but there are always employers that will hire them. It's just getting them to and from there that can be difficult.

Furthermore, financial barriers interfere with addressing the criminogenic need for substance abuse. According to one of the participants, "The thing with the drug use is you can get people rehab, but there are not a lot of free rehabs that are decent."

Medical disabilities. Medical disabilities were also identified as challenges for offenders to be successful in completing programs that target criminogenic needs. Medical disabilities refer to the inability of offenders to attend programming due to physical/mental health disabilities. Unaddressed medical and mental health disabilities were identified as personal challenges of offenders that influence PPOs addressing criminogenic needs.

> Some personal problems [are] they can have medical issues that are not addressed. They can have mental health issues that are not addressed. They could be physically disabled such as walking with a cane or crutches. Some people have come [and] they didn't even have [the] assistance of a cane or walker or something. I mean, it was just awful to see how they tried to walk, and it just took all their effort just to get from the bus stop to the building. [I] had someone who was hearing impaired. It took a while to get through to him to let him know that we will work with him. Even though he was hearing impaired, we would work with him, and he didn't want to...he just didn't want to do it because he had been so used to saying you know I can't hear, I can't hear. But eventually, he got with the program because he was just going around and around. But he went through it and did just great. But it was a problem initially.

Mental illness stigma. Compounding on mental health is a stigma. Mental illness stigma refers to individual or family resistance to mental health services or lack of knowledge about services. Some PPOs shared their experience in having difficulty with addressing mental illness.

> With mental health, they often don't want to admit there's a problem, and you can't address an issue if the person does not want to acknowledge the problem.

One participant directly attributed this difficulty to the mental illness stigma.

> Because people are afraid, and there is a stigma.

PPOs make efforts to reduce this challenge for offenders by educating individuals under community supervision and their family members about mental illness. Furthermore, PPOs seek community resources to connect offenders with that assist with mental illness.

> I try to get the family in and talk to them and let them know that there is no shame in having a mentally ill family member that's also on probation. I try to relieve some of the shame and try to find out what kind of community resources that are out there to give them the support that they need.

Offender's ability. PPOs identified the ability of the offender as having an impact on addressing criminogenic needs. Specifically, PPOs discussed their experience with the offenders' learning level and comprehension ability. Therefore, PPOs address offenders' needs according to the individual. One participant shared the importance of recognizing that offenders are different, and their needs must be addressed accordingly. The participant stated, "Well, you have to meet them where they are. You have to understand how they learn because they're all different."

Another PPO discussed how the learning and comprehension ability of an offender interfered with addressing criminogenic needs. Therefore, PPOs had to harmonize the offenders' skills and identified criminogenic needs.

> If you had an offender that was supposed to get a job, that's great, but it's not going to do the offender any good if you can't read. And so, you had to start with where he was and most of the offenders at the time had maybe about a ninth-grade education, but I think they read on probably like a fifth or sixth-grade reading level. So even though the guy had to get a job, he really couldn't get a job if he couldn't figure out how to fill out the application. So, you had to figure out a way to balance that.

Offender's motivation. The offender's motivation refers to the offender's behavior and willingness to address criminogenic needs and be successful under community supervision. There were 12 vignettes assigned to this open code. Participants were consistent when discussing the effectiveness of referrals to address attitudes and cognitions, often expressing that although offenders are referred to programs to address attitudes and cognitions, the effectiveness relies upon the offender. Therefore, although PPOs make referrals, attending programs is the responsibility of the offender. According to one participant, "It depends, sometimes, on the person how effective their referral is because the person first has to show up to wherever we've sent them to, and generally, it's not somewhere we take them to."

Offenders' motivation further impact PPOs experience in addressing criminogenic needs because some offenders attend programs only because they were referred rather than a desire to participate.

> Then again, it all depends on the individual. They can go into these classes, and I think if they really work the program and the classes, then it will work for them.

> But you have some like they are hard-headed, and they go on those classes because you told them to and not because they want to. That's also with NA/AA. They're only going because you told them to, not because they want to get anything out. But some of them when they enter into these classes they do. You do see a change if they're working the program.

Additionally, participants shared that the offender's motivation to change was a factor in the effectiveness of the program referral.

> Some may be in denial. That presents a problem because you can't address it. You can't address the problem if the person doesn't think it's a problem. I mean we could think it's a problem all we want to. If they don't have a problem with issues such as drinking, then it's not a problem for them. They don't see it as a problem. So, it's nothing for them to work on.
>
> It just all depends on the individual. If the individual wants to change then yeah, it could be effective but if you have you have some individuals that refuse to change, and they're going to live their lives the way they've been living then in the way they want to live it so then no it's not effective, and those are the ones that end up back in the system.

Antisocial associates and environment. There were five vignettes assigned to this open code. Some participants expressed antisocial associates and the environment as the most challenging need to address. Furthermore, they shared that antisocial associates and the environment also has an impact on needs that are central to ensuring the probationer or parolee does not re-offend.

> Like I just said, the people who go [to prison] come out and go back to the same place that they've been hanging around with the same people that they hang around with, then they're more likely to offend. And if we get them out of those neighborhoods and away from those individuals and give them some drug treatment and some employment, then they're usually better off.

Participants also considered the antisocial associations that offenders have with friends and family members that impede rehabilitation. Thus, resulting in antisocial associates and the environment as a challenging need to address.

> Sometimes it's hard to work with. It's hard to convince or to change people's surroundings. You know it's hard to change people's families. It's hard to change who people associate or whom they consider their friends or loved ones. And so even though we may see that they're negative or they may have a bad influence on them. But to them they are, you know, they are my brother, my sister, my you know whatever and so sometimes I think that's a challenging part of getting them to see and explore a new environment for themselves.

Organizational-Centric Factors

Organizational-centric factors is an umbrella term to describe issues within government organizations or criminal justice system. These factors consider that probation and parole organizations have adopted EBPs such as the Risk Need Responsivity model. Thus, organizations provide the foundation and expectations for PPOs to address the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders. Therefore,

organizational factors have a direct influence on PPOs' experiences. Figure 5 identifies the open codes assigned to this theme.

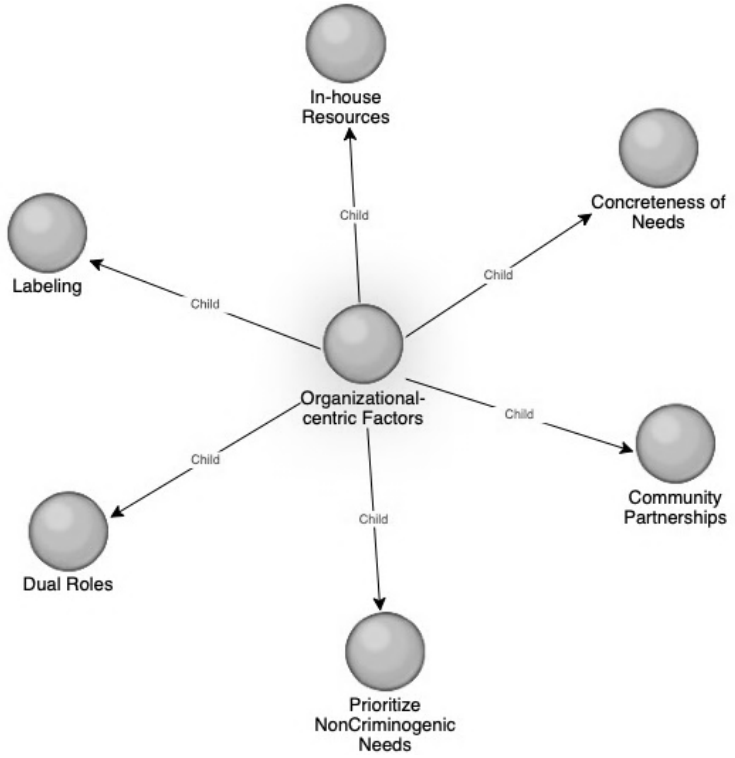

Figure 5. Organizational-centric factors codes.

In-house resources. The majority of participants mentioned in-house programs or resources when discussing their experience in addressing the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders. There were nine vignettes assigned to this open code. Some of the accounts were evidence that in-house resources enhanced or had a positive influence on their experiences with assisting the individuals they supervised.

One participant referred to in-house resources when asked how effective their referrals to programs were.

> Very effective. We have housing coordinators that [help] if somebody comes in the program that they're homeless. We have housing coordinators that help them

> get housing. We have the housing coordinators that help with employment. And they also have other participants that they may be hiring on their jobs or they know somebody that's hiring. So, it's very productive.

Another participant identified substance abuse and employment when asked about the easiest criminogenic need to address, attributing having in-house resources to the ease of addressing the need.

> Probably substance use disorders because we have people on hand. We don't have to necessarily refer them out to anywhere. We have in-house substance use disorder people, counselors, and programs for that. Employment, not so hard. Since we have the reentry folks in-house now that actually work on employment and housing.

One participant shared more detail. Specifically, the participant identified that in house resources were more effective because PPOs could easily monitor offenders' attendance and progress.

> I feel like a lot of our people that we actually refer out, sometimes I think it's easy for them to kind of get lost rather than if they come to the office. Then we know if they're attending. We can keep up better with the progress, and we know firsthand.

Community partnerships. Although PPOs identified in-house resources as beneficial, some participants shared the benefits of making external referrals to community partners when asked about referring to programs. Community partnerships

refer to external stakeholders in the community that provide assists offenders with criminogenic and noncriminogenic needs.

Several participants shared their experience with referring offenders with mental illness to the local Community Service Board (CSB). Notably, one participant shared that offenders are referred to several community partners to address various needs, such as mental health, employment, job training, substance abuse, medical, and education.

> Ok, well outside, we refer them to behavioral health for mental health issues...And then I have referred out to AA or one of those support or mutual help places...I have referred to Goodwill for clothing, for help with resumes and that type stuff and interviews, mock interviews. I've referred someone to Goodwill when they had programs where they help them with getting certifications, with getting jobs...Referred to the local college so they can work on their GED...Referred to outside housing...Outside and inside employment. Referred to medical, local medical agencies that volunteer...To food banks...

Concreteness of needs. There were six vignettes assigned to this open code. The majority of the accounts reflected the same response, indicating that employment was the most straightforward criminogenic need to address. According to the data, the reason for this need being easy to manage is PPOs' ability to identify and monitor the needs. Furthermore, it is concrete as to what resources PPOs should connect offenders with to address the need.

> They have some hard things to try to address when they're on probation. And I would think that the easiest thing to address would be employment. They're all up

> there. They can basically go out, and there are people in the community that will hire them. They just have to put forth the effort.
>
> Well, employment is pretty easy. There are a lot of places that will hire individuals that have records or on probation.

Differing from other vignettes, one participant identified substance use when asked about the easiest criminogenic need to address. However, this participant clarified that concreteness is relevant when addressing criminogenic needs by stating, "I think addiction and mental health needs. You can identify that easier than something that you have to dig into to understand what the issue or issues are."

Prioritize noncriminogenic needs. Although PPOs shared their experiences with addressing criminogenic needs, the majority of PPOs also discussed prioritizing non-criminogenic needs. There were over 30 vignettes assigned to this open code. The non-criminogenic needs prioritized over criminogenic needs were clothing, food, housing, and mental health. Several participants shared the reasons for prioritization were that those needs impacted offenders' ability to focus on or address other needs. Therefore, I use the term *high-influence* needs when referring to those criminogenic needs.

> I feel like if someone is homeless really everything else is kind of mute. You know, you first have to get that problem solved. If someone is homeless or they're hungry, then no matter what programming you're trying to facilitate that they're not going to be able to have the capability of really paying the attention that they need to get something out of the program. So, I think to me those basic needs such as shelter, and food is a priority.

Other participants related the relevance of prioritizing noncriminogenic needs to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, indicating that these are basic needs offenders must have before reaching another level of satisfaction. In this study, that next level would be addressing criminogenic needs.

> Absolutely. Like for instance, you have somebody that comes in that's homeless. With the <name of company>, they have to report in every day, and it's hard for them...like the Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. I can't tell somebody they need to report to the <name of company> every day and they don't even have a place to live. So if they come in and they're homeless, I need to address that need for housing so they can get food and shelter and clothing before I can put a demand on them to report to a place every day when they don't even know what they're going to be sleeping at the previous day. So, I think addressing those needs, absolutely.
>
> If somebody was homeless, that took precedence over everything else. Because if you're trying to get someone to get a job, or go to an AA meeting, or come into the center or the probation office for some type of class but they don't even have a place to stay, their mind is probably not there with you. So, we got to address the first basic need, and shelter is one of them.

Some PPOs shared that addressing needs identified on the risk and need assessment is not be a priority if a *high-influence* need exists.

> Yes, because the needs assessment might say the priority is to get them a job, but you know that they need housing, or you know that they need to get mental health

> issues or something of that nature. So you would try to handle those needs before sending them out to work for someone when it's really not going to work if you send them to get a job and they don't have anywhere to live, or they have some mental health issues, or they have some drug issues. So, you try to prioritize what they need the most even though the need assessment might tell you, "Well, they got to go to work."

PPOs also experienced prioritizing non-criminogenic needs for the safety of the offender and the community.

> Yes. If a person is experiencing a psychotic episode, you had to address that immediately. Again, that goes because you want the person to be safe, and you want the community to be safe. And that took priority over perhaps getting a GED. It just took priority. So, you had to learn how to prioritize really quickly and use a little bit of common sense when it came to dealing with your offenders.
>
> Yes. If they're in a dangerous situation in where they're living or if they're in a bad situation in where they're living, and we need to try to find them other housing. Or if they become homeless during the time that they're under your supervision, then you have to address housing before you address anything else.

Labeling. More than 10 vignettes were assigned to the open code of labeling. This theme is an umbrella term used in this dissertation to capture participants' responses about the term used when referring to the individuals they supervise. Labels applied to the individuals under supervision are often a result of the common terminology used within an organization. The majority of the respondents identified the use of terms

considered as ‘labeling.’ The expressions specified were probationer, parolee, convicted felon, and offender.

One participant shared having used various labeling terms, “I’ve used offender, probationer, or convicted felon mainly.”

Notably, another participant added details to the experience of labeling the individuals supervised when asked if the same term was used when connecting the individuals with resources. This participant viewed the use of labeling terms as being realistic for the benefit of those under community supervision and others who provide rehabilitation resources to those individuals.

> No, not for me because I think, again, you do these people a disservice and the people you’re trying to connect them with while making them something they’re not. Now we all know everyone, almost everyone, can be rehabilitated, but you cannot present someone as being this perfect person when they’ve struggled with the law and doing things they shouldn’t. So, you have to meet people where they are. And I think it’s a huge disservice to paint them as something they’re not or they don’t have the issues that they do have. You can’t work on something if you pretend it’s not there. They’re probationers. They have problems with the law. Yes, they’re redeemable. Yes, we can rehabilitate them. But the first thing anyone will tell you with correcting a wrong is accepting what it is. And so, I never treated anyone with disrespect or made them feel less than they were. But the first thing you got to do is accept what you are and where you are, and if you’re a

> probationer, then that's what you are. And we're going to work to remove that from your life, so you are never that again.

While discussing the criminogenic need of employment, some participants shared that it is easy to address yet identified difficulty with offenders internalizing labels. Thus, PPOs contradictorily assist offenders with overcoming the exact labels they placed upon individuals.

> I think you know as an officer, I think sometimes it is easier when we can make a way for offenders to be able to find employment...Because I feel like a lot of our people that we work with or individuals that are under sentence, oftentimes they feel a certain way about themselves and they just sometimes they lack the confidence in getting the job on their own.
>
> I think mainly maybe employment. If they can get employment, I believe that they have a better chance of making it because you have a lot of them that come in and be like well I'm a convicted felon, and I have so many convictions on my record, and it's hard to get a job because nobody will hire me.

Fewer participants shared that they avoid labeling terms. Directly identifying those terms as having a negative connotation or impact on individuals. These participants preferred the use of softer, more favorable words, such as client, defendant, participants, or returning citizens, or the individuals' names. One participant stated, "I don't like to use offender because that could be degrading. I don't even like to use probationer or parolee. I use participants or defendant."

One participant identified that the term used has changed over time, indicating the organizational impact of PPOs using specific labeling terminology. The participant shared, “Well, over the years, it’s changed. Most recently, they are returning citizens.”

Furthermore, the participant explained the differences in terminology used when linking offenders with resources, “Returning citizens. They could actually be a client. It depends on where you are referring them.”

Dual roles. Dual roles were the only code that had a 100% response rate, indicating that for all participants, the primary goal of their job was balancing law enforcement and counseling. Dual roles are essential and related to the participants addressing the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders.

> So, it encompasses that even though a probation/parole officer is not a counselor, you have to play the role of a counselor also. So, it’s not just supervising a caseload. You try to help them the best way you can...you may have a probationer that works, but they have issues in their family. You help give them coping skills. So, you serve as a probation officer as you enforce the conditions of their probation and make sure that they abide by the laws, but then you serve as a counselor also because you want to help them and guide them.

Inherent-Centric Factors

Inherent-centric factors is an umbrella term to describe environmental issues (e.g., lack of support from family or negative childhood environment). This theme recognizes the external factors that are beyond the individual and organizational control. However,

inherent-centric factors influence PPOs addressing the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders. There were two subthemes assigned to this theme (see Figure 6).

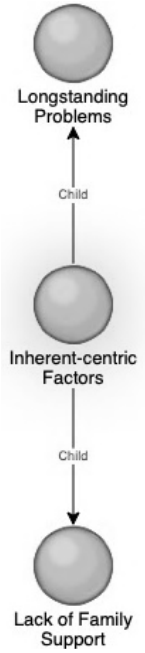

Figure 6. Inherent-centric factors codes.

Lack of family support. There were ten vignettes assigned to this open code. The vignettes were evidence that the criminogenic need of family and marital relations was vital in offenders being successful while serving a community supervision sentence. Additionally, PPOs identified that the need for family and marital relations had an impact on other criminogenic needs. At the same time, the majority of participants were consistent in sharing that offenders lack family support.

Another participant shared that the effectiveness of referrals to programs was dependent upon having family support, “If the offender had family support, they’re very effective. If the offender did not, he had a 50/50 chance in succeeding.”

However, some participants identified family support as a personal challenge that influences the success of adult felony offenders completing programming or treatment targeting their needs. According to one participant, “They have barriers from their family and their friends who make fun of them because they want to change their lives.”

Notably, another participant echoed that family support was a personal challenge encountered by offenders that influenced their success in treatment that addressed criminogenic needs. This participant shared details that were evidence of PPOs attempting to address the criminogenic need of family and marital relations for offenders to be successful with programming that focused on other needs, but the damage offenders caused to those relationships interfere.

> I think one major is support - family support, friend support - because we have Family Night once a month in the <my company> and we have some people that say that they don’t have any family. I’m pretty sure they have family, but they may not have family that deals with them because they probably have burned bridges...So I think the support from outside, support other than the people that are in the treatment programs.

Longstanding problems. The open code of longstanding problems refers to problems that have existed for an extended period of time from childhood (e.g., trauma, substance abuse) and are a result of the environment. Some participants identified criminogenic needs as being challenging to address due to the length of time offenders have encountered the issues. The vignette below includes a description of personal

experience in attempting to assist offenders with the criminogenic needs of substance use and antisocial cognitions.

> I think it's addiction...I have a lot of participants that come in, and they've been using drugs since they were ten years old... It's a habit, and it's hard, but it's what they know in life. I think that's a problem. They've been doing it for so long and nobody identified is as wrong.

Summary

This chapter contained the results of the analysis, connected the analysis back to the research questions and demonstrated consistency of the analysis with the qualitative phenomenological methodology. Six participants were interviewed for this qualitative phenomenological study. Interview questions were structured to understand PPOs experience in addressing the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders. All participants were current or former PPOs with experience linking adult felony offenders with resources that focused on reducing future reoffending. Five of the six participants had experience as a probation officer. One participant had experience as both, a probation and parole officer.

Consistent with qualitative phenomenological methodology, there were three levels of analysis, cross-interview, open coding, and thematic. Sixty-eight codes emerged from open coding. Cross-interview analysis was exercised to identify the commonalities of the participants' responses. Constant comparison analysis was exercised using word clouds and NVivo 12 software to discover selective codes that emerged into categories. Further constant comparison analysis was conducted to discover the relationships

between and within the codes, leading to three themes. The three themes that resulted from this study summarized the contributing factors that influenced PPOs in addressing the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders: (a) individual-centric factors, (b) organizational-centric factors, and (c) inherent-centric factors.

There were no significant differences in the factors contributing to PPOs' experience in assisting offenders with needs that impact future reoffending. While probation and parole organizations have made great strides in providing the foundation for PPOs to implement EBPs, such as the RNR model, it is evident in the research results that there are other factors that interfere with PPOs adhering to the model. Thus, there is not full implementation of the adopted. Chapter 5 includes the summary for the critical analysis and discussion on the three themes.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of PPOs implementing the RNR model by addressing criminogenic needs among adult felony offenders. The interview questions elicited details of shared experiences from PPOs with experience assisting offenders with resources to reduce future reoffending. I obtained qualitative data through in-depth, semistructured individual interviews. According to Yin (2014), the qualitative methodology allows for the study of a phenomenon through open-ended questions. The intent of my study was to explore the lived experiences of PPOs and to examine how PPOs experiences impact adherence to organizational policies.

Results of the data from six PPOs supported previous research (Bosma et al., 2018) of PPOs deviating from EBPs implemented by community supervision organizations. Furthermore, the theoretical framework was confirmed in that the results indicated that the effectiveness and completion of implementation relies heavily on frontline workers. Additionally, labels of individuals supervised by PPOs interfered with EBP implementation. Through analysis of the data, I identified three themes as critical factors contributing to the lived experiences of PPOs addressing the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders: (a) individual-centric factors, (b) organizational-centric factors, and (c) inherent-centric factors. The results of my study may provide opportunities for criminal justice organizations to implement EBPs successfully, accomplishing the mission of providing adequate supervision and reducing recidivism.

Interpretation of the Findings

Individual-Centric Factors

Factors related to the individual offender impacted PPOs' adherence to RNA results as prescribed by community supervision organizations. Although not explicitly referred to as *responsivity*, assisting offenders with basic needs related to finances, such as housing, food, and transportation, were prioritized over addressing criminogenic needs. According to Haqanee et al. (2015), noncriminogenic needs became a priority because of the importance offenders place on those needs.

Furthermore, PPOs identified the noncriminogenic needs, including mental health, as personal challenges offenders encountered that impacted the successful completion of treatment or programs that address criminogenic needs. As a result, PPOs delayed referrals to programs that target criminogenic needs to address noncriminogenic needs. Although the RNR model focuses on addressing criminogenic needs, Andrews and Bonta (2015) identified that addressing both criminogenic and noncriminogenic needs is relevant to achieving personal satisfaction.

When PPOs made referrals to programs, the offenders' motivation impacted the referrals' effectiveness. Similar to the findings of Haqanee et al. (2015), PPOs expressed that some offenders attended programs only because of court conditions or instructions from the PPO rather than a personal desire to address the identified risk factors. Other offenders were in denial of the existing issues. As a result, PPOs experienced difficulty in addressing criminogenic needs that offenders did not view as a problem. As street-level bureaucrats, PPOs have discretion in assisting individuals who receive services (Lipsky,

1980). Therefore, PPOs postponed addressing some criminogenic needs to focus on building a rapport with offenders to increase motivation and willingness to collaborate on accomplishing recidivism reduction goals.

Although RNAs identify risk factors that reduce recidivism for PPOs to address, PPOs targeted needs not identified on the RNA. Participating PPOs explained the deviation by noting that some offenders may not have the ability to address needs due to learning or comprehension levels. Therefore, consistent with findings from previous studies (Bosma et al., 2018; Schaeffer & Williamson, 2017), my study's conclusions indicate that PPOs referred offenders to programs regardless of RNA results. Aligned with the street-level bureaucracy theory (Lipsky, 1980), PPOs, as frontline workers, have developed individual processes to determine what needs an offender should address. For example, PPOs referred offenders with an employment need for educational programming to increase reading comprehension levels, although the offender did not have an educational need. Andrews and Bonta (2015) identified such personal strengths as specific responsivity. Although specific responsivity resulted in PPOs postponing criminogenic needs, Andrews and Bonta stated that treatment interventions should consider offenders' personal strengths due to its propensity to interfere with treatment. Therefore, similar to the findings of Haqanee et al. (2015), PPOs spent a vast amount of time assisting adult felony offenders with needs that influence criminogenic needs.

The emphasis in my study on antisocial associates being a challenging need to address was consistent with the literature related to PPOs adhering to RNA results. Bonta et al. (2011) referenced PPOs spending little time addressing the criminogenic need of

antisocial associates. My study's conclusions emphasized that PPOs' inability to control offenders returning to procriminal environments and peers was a challenge when attempting to address antisocial associates. Furthermore, few programs address the need for antisocial associates (Haqanee et al., 2015). Understanding the resource limitations, PPOs have referred individuals to counselors and cognitive-behavioral therapy as efforts to target this need.

Organizational-Centric Factors

One of the noticeable differences in my study's results compared to previous research is the emphasis on access to internal resources versus the emphasis on limited community resources previously discussed in the literature (Bunting et al., 2019; Ethridge et al., 2014; Haqanee et al., 2015). The availability of in-house resources and programming enhanced the experiences of PPOs in addressing the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders. There were many examples in my study where participants cited in-house resources as being helpful when addressing needs. Furthermore, in-house programs provided a better experience than external programs for PPOs to monitor compliance. While participants cited in-house resources as being beneficial, they credited community partnerships with stakeholders for filling gaps when in-house resources were not available.

Consistent with the findings of Haqanee et al. (2015), PPOs were more likely to address needs easily identified, monitored, and linked to resources. My study's results emphasize that concrete needs—such as employment, education, and substance use—were easier to address compared to antisocial attitudes, cognitions, and associates. The

former are needs that PPOs did not have to dig into to identify the problem, but PPOs lacked a clearly defined role in addressing the latter needs. Employment was also a need PPOs viewed as indirectly influencing offenders' antisocial attitudes, cognitions, and associates because it reduced the leisure time offenders had to engage in criminal behavior. The results of my study are consistent with the findings of Viglione et al. (2015) that employment was the most discussed topic in interactions with offenders.

While PPOs reported that employment is a straightforward need to address, PPOs also identified that employment was a personal challenge for offenders because of labels. The majority of participants in my study admitted to using labels such as *convicted felons*, *offenders*, *sex offenders*, *probationers*, and *parolees*. Furthermore, PPOs continued to use the labels when linking offenders to resources. According to Willis (2018), labels such as *offender*, *sex offender*, and *criminal* are commonplace for individuals involved in the criminal justice system.

The assignment of labels begins at an individual's first interaction with law enforcement, and the list of labels continues to grow as an individual proceeds through the criminal justice system (Abadinsky, 2009; Becker, 1963; Moore & Tangney, 2017; Willis, 2018). Labels can reduce individuals' confidence when seeking employment. Furthermore, labels reduce other opportunities, including housing (Alexander, 2010; Hull, 2006; Simon, 2007). In labeling theory, Becker (1963) identified that labels influence continued deviant behavior and participation in criminal activities. Consequently, PPOs attempt to remove labels placed on individuals by organizations and, ultimately, by PPOs themselves. Therefore, PPOs have dual roles as law enforcement and

change agents. PPOs enforce the conditions of the courts or parole boards while simultaneously assisting offenders with resources to reduce future reoffending and removing labels that interfere with their efforts.

Inherent-Centric Factors

Some criminogenic needs were beyond the immediate influence of PPOs, such as marital and family relations. Consistent with the findings of Haqanee et al. (2015), participating PPOs expressed family support as an indicator of adult felony offenders' success in addressing criminogenic needs and completing programs that target the needs. However, participants identified family support as a personal challenge some offenders encountered. Offenders lacked family support for various reasons such as actions taken during previous antisocial behavior; the family continued to engage in criminal activity or did not support the offenders' change in general. Wooditch et al. (2014), identified that offenders who reduced associations with criminally involved family members experienced reductions in recidivism. However, PPOs experienced challenges in addressing the criminogenic need for family and marital relations because of offenders' difficulty disconnecting from loved ones. Furthermore, PPOs had to identify a balance between positive and negative family involvement. According to Viglione et al. (2015), although PPOs addressed other criminogenic needs, they refrained from discussing family relationships.

Offenders developed longstanding problems that were difficult to abandon as a result of environmental influences. The deep-seated issues interfered with PPOs addressing criminogenic needs. Wooditch et al. (2014) identified that it took offenders

with severe addiction more days to have a decrease in substance use than it did for criminogenic need areas for other types of offenders. Participating PPOs explained that offenders with issues stemming from childhood or existed for an extended period were challenging to address. Therefore, as previously mentioned, the individual situations of offenders were considered when addressing offenders' needs.

Limitations of the Study

There were several identified potential limitations to the trustworthiness of the study. The first limitation was the study's methodology. Therefore, the results were limited to the sample included in the study. While I still agree that qualitative research was the appropriate methodology for my study, qualitative research cannot be generalized.

The second limitation was the small sample size. There were six participants included in my study. According to Guest et al. (2006), six to 12 interviews are sufficient to reach data saturation. However, there were limitations to the demographics of the sample. The majority of the sample was of the African-American race. Therefore, the findings of my study could be race specific, although the responses were consistent with that of the one diverse participant. Additionally, the sample mostly consisted of participants in the age range of 51 years old or above. Furthermore, the majority of the sample was a probation officer.

The third limitation was the restraints of the modified interview instrument used in a previous study. The use of this interview instrument risked participants either not responding or not providing accurate responses due to recall errors, perceptions of

experiences, or concerns of anonymity. Although efforts were made to ensure confidentiality and encourage full disclosure of exact experiences, it is normal for individuals to be apprehensive to share experiences that may be viewed as a negative reflection. Qualitative research tools, such as interviews, are designed to capture lived experiences according to the meaning of the participants, not hard facts. Furthermore, the semi-structured design of the interview tool permitted follow-up questions if clarifying information was needed.

Recommendations

Future studies should use a random sampling technique to target diverse participants. PPOs of various demographics, such as age, race, and gender, may offer alternate views on the experiences of addressing criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders. In addition to diverse demographics among participants, future studies should equally include probation officers and parole officers in the sample.

Participants identified that in-house resources were beneficial in addressing criminogenic needs. Additionally, in-house resources were a relevant factor in the reason criminogenic needs were easy to address. Future studies should quantitatively examine the effect internal and external referrals have on reducing recidivism. This recommendation may assist in determining whether in-house resources are a convenient method for officers to make referrals and monitor offender compliance or if there are positive offender outcomes. Furthermore, it may provide insight for community supervision organizations on the relevance of utilizing funds for internal resources to enhance PPOs experience in transferring RNA results into case management.

Haqanee et al. (2015) suggested for future studies to focus on the responsivity principle. Although my study contributed to the body of literature related to adult PPOs addressing criminogenic needs, the findings confirmed that PPOs supervising adults have similar experiences in addressing criminogenic needs as PPOs supervising youth. Furthermore, the responsivity principle was not explored in my current study. Considering the similarities in the findings of my study and Haqanee et al.'s study in that responsivity was prioritized over addressing criminogenic needs, future studies should examine whether addressing responsivity increases offenders' motivation to address criminogenic needs.

The focus of my study was PPOs in a southeastern state. The lived experiences of PPOs in other geographical regions should be explored to determine whether there are different experiences based on location. Researchers should continue to explore the reasons PPOs deviate from RNA results and organizational policies should continue to be explored to enhance opportunities for offenders' needs to be addressed.

Implications

My study is redounded to the benefit of positive social change in community supervision organizations fully implementing EBPs to provide effective supervision and reduce recidivism. Thus, there may be an increase in offenders reentering society with a decreased risk of reoffending. Additionally, relevant information was provided that may inform policy revisions to enhance PPOs' adherence to RNAs as prescribed. In turn, PPOs may be more likely to make appropriate referrals according to RNA results and apply RNA results in case management.

According to the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) (2019), previous grant cohorts, including community supervision organizations, have struggled with case management when implementing programs related to criminogenic risk and needs to improve reentry for adults. The lived experiences of PPOs in addressing criminogenic needs for adult felony offenders may be beneficial to organizations implementing reentry programs to reduce recidivism and promote public safety. Participants of my study reported an existing focus on internal and external resources, however, there were challenges identified in transitioning RNA results into collaborative case management. Therefore, community supervision organizations should consider enhancing the availability of resources and the ability of PPOs to address the criminogenic needs.

BJA focuses on assisting organizations with improving access to and delivery of RNAs, collaborative comprehensive case management, and programming for offender reentry that address criminogenic risk and needs (BJA, 2019). Travis (2000) suggested that community supervision organizations have limited funding that restrains PPOs from providing services for offenders to successfully reintegrate into the community. Therefore, considering additional funding sources such as grants may be beneficial in accomplishing the full implementation of the RNR model adopted by community supervision organizations to address offenders' criminogenic needs.

At the societal or policy level, there are positive social implications for society to understand the detriment of labels to individuals under community supervision. The labels society places on individuals contradict what society expresses as the desired outcome of probation and parole - rehabilitation. Therefore, the findings of my study may

educate society to have a possible influence on removing labels or exchanging labels for more favorable terms.

The qualitative methodology for phenomenological research resulted in findings built upon the work of Haqanee et al. (2015). The modified replication of the questionnaire supported the internal and external validity of the research through similar outcomes. Therefore, the experiences of PPOs who supervise juveniles and adult felony offenders are similar in addressing criminogenic needs.

Conclusion

Community supervision is an opportunity for offenders to remain in the community during rehabilitation. Community supervision organizations have adopted EBPs such as the RNR model to reduce risk factors that impact future reoffending. However, there is a thin line between organizational implementation and the full implementation of EBPs. That line is dependent upon PPOs as frontline workers, or street-level bureaucrats, implementing the adopted practices in the day-to-day operations. The purpose of my study established the answer to the research question concerning the lived experiences of PPOs addressing the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders. Several factors influence whether PPOs implement the RNR model by addressing the criminogenic needs of adult felony offenders. Although PPOs attempt to address criminogenic needs, the effectiveness of the efforts is dependent upon the individuals supervised, the organizational structure, and inherent factors.

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Appendix A: Request/Approval to use-modify interview instrument

Subject: Re: Request: Interview Instrument Access
Date: Wednesday, August 21, 2019 at 10:55:37 AM Eastern Daylight Time **From:** Zohrah Haqanee
To: Maria Stephenson
Attachments: dissertation probation questions.docx

Hi Maria,
It took some time to dig it up from my files because although I originally included it in the appendix of one of my dissertation drafts, we decided to remove it and summarize it briefly in methodology. Yes, you have my permission to use and modify the questions. I've attached the questions in a separate document.

Zohrah

From: Maria Stephenson **Sent:** Monday, August 19, 2019 11:12 PM
To: Zohrah Haqanee **Subject:** Re: Request: Interview Instrument Access

Hi Zohrah,

Thanks for your response. I appreciate your willingness to share your interview questions with me. I look forward to reviewing them.

I do need to ask, do I have your permission to use them in my data collection for my dissertation study and modify them if necessary?

Thanks,

Maria Stephenson

Appendix B: Social Media Recruitment Post

Hello and welcome to my doctoral research study page. My name is Maria Stephenson and I am a Ph.D. (Doctor of Philosophy) candidate at Walden University in the Criminal Justice Program. I am conducting a study in partial fulfillment of my dissertation. I am recruiting six to twelve research participants who meet the following criterion:

1. Currently or previously a probation or parole officer in a southeastern state supervising adult felony offenders.
2. Have connected or attempted to connect adult felony offenders to resources to assist with needs.

PLEASE NOTE: Individuals who I supervise are **excluded** from participation in this study.

Participants will be interviewed, which will consist of being asked to answer at least 12 questions about their lived experiences with linking adult felony offenders to resources to assist with needs. All interviews will be audio recorded and conducted via Zoom. Each interview will take approximately 60 minutes. Participants will have the opportunity to ask me questions about the research study and interview process before the interview. There will also be a debriefing after the interview for additional questions to be asked. The results of the study will be provided to participants through a brochure/pamphlet. Additionally, findings of the study will be published in a professional journal.

This study is voluntary, and you are free to stop the interview at any time. You will not be penalized or punished in any manner for not participating in this study or withdrawing after beginning participation. Please note that this is an opportunity to provide your voice in probation and parole officers addressing the needs of adult felony offenders. My research study is not connected or affiliated with my current position as probation/parole officer for the <agency name>. This research study is in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy in Criminal Justice degree.

If you meet the criterion and are interested in participating in the study, please click the link to access and read the informed consent form.

Thank you all in advance for all consideration and time given to this matter!

Appendix C: Questionnaire

1. What is your race?
    a. American Indian or Alaska Native
    b. Asian
    c. Black or African American
    d. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
    e. White or Caucasian
    f. Other _____
2. What is your age?
    a. 18 - 20 years old
    b. 21 - 30 years old
    c. 31- 40 years old
    d. 41-50 years old
    e. 51 years old or above
3. Tell me about yourself
    a. Were you a probation or parole officer?
    b. Are you currently in that position?
4. Tell me about the reason you entered the profession of a probation/parole officer.
5. Tell me about your job duties as a probation/parole officer.
    a. Based on your job duties, tell me what do you view as the primary focus or goal of being a probation/parole officer?

What term do you use for the individuals you supervise?

Is there are different term used when linking individuals with resources?

Which criminogenic needs in your experience are easier to address?

What factors do you think account for this?

6. Which criminogenic needs in your experience have proven challenging to address?
    a. What factors do you think account for this?
7. Out of the needs that are identified using the risk-need assessment tool, which needs do you think are more central to ensuring that the probationer/parolee does not reoffend?

What is your experience with addressing adult's attitudes and cognitions?

How do you deal with this challenge/address it typically?

Is this method effective?

Do you refer to any particular programs?

How effective do you find these referrals?

Have there been instances where you have had to prioritize addressing certain identified needs over others?

Has this situation ever happened where you have had to prioritize non-criminogenic needs, due to the relevance for an individual offender, that were contrary to that indicated by their risk-need assessment?

8. What, if any, are some personal challenges that adults are presented with that influence the success of these adults completing programming or treatment targeting their needs?